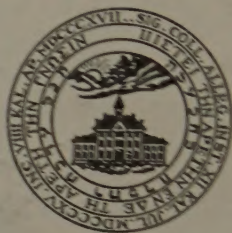


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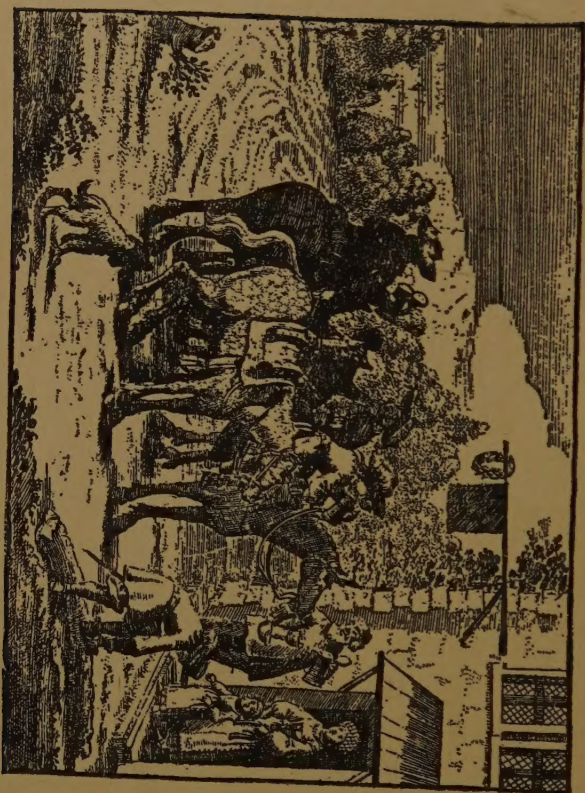
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**THE INNS OF THE
MIDDLE AGES**



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THE INNS OF THE MIDDLE AGES

By

W. C. FIREBAUGH



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THE INNS OF THE
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The Inns of the Middle Ages

The Inns of the Middle Ages

INTRODUCTION

"Six thousand gold pieces a year and a gentleman's leisure!" Thus spoke Odoacer, and ushered in that period which we know as the Middle Ages.

With the decline of the older civilization a chaotic unrest corroded the peace of the littoral of the western Mediterranean and the hinterlands, north and south; ignorance and superstition gained a stronger and more unshakable grip upon the popular mind, and feudalism, the cornerstone of organized society, even to the present day, levied its tithe of blood and treasure upon the serf, through the retainer and the seneschal. Living conditions were so horrible that plague after plague stalked through the land. Science there was none, and generations owed their survival to the natural immunity which was created in the sufferers themselves, aided, without doubt, by the poor construction of living quarters which, maugre all efforts at calking, were still well ventilated.

Save by the sea, Europe had little commerce. That which existed was precarious and irregular, beset on land and water by robbers and pirates, some

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of which have left inexpugnable marks of their colonizing forays in the light blue eyes and fair complexions seen to this day in Normandy. Amidst the welter of chaos, there were two traditions which persisted. Christianity had obligated its confessors to the practice of charity and hospitality to all, and the innate instinct of barbarians is, and always has been, to entertain the wayfarer and minister to his needs. Is it then a matter of wonder that the calling of mine host should find little with which to occupy itself during the earlier ages of the interminable millenium which had dawned? The stormy eras of the Merovingians and the Carlovingians, characterized as they were by murderous intrigue, punctuated by hostile invasion and intestine warfare, when perforce some captive queen was forced to drink from the skull of her murdered husband or lover, are perhaps, even less known than the darker periods which followed in their wake, and the extinction of culture, save in the east, and in the monasteries in which it still flickered, wrought irreparable havoc with source materials.

Century follows century, and the picture darkens until we reach the age of the first crusade which may be said to represent the nadir of occidental civilization. Thereafter the dawn of a new awakening begins to spread from the east, sometimes, alas, reddened by the flames of religious conflict, and the scholar who would understand that marvelous phenomenon known as the Renaissance, must look to the twelfth century for the causes which gave it birth.

Hospitality was an innate characteristic of Celt, German, Goth, and Hun, and Christianity had little to teach its newest converts on that score. Tacitus,

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in speaking of the Germans, comments favorably upon their willingness to invite all comers to their homes and tables, remarking that they provided the necessities of life in proportion to their means, and in case it happened that some barbarian had not the wherewithal to feed a guest, he would conduct him to another establishment, and this without even the form of an invitation. It mattered not whence he came or whither bound, the guest was entitled to food and lodging. Known or unknown, prominent or obscure, the rites of hospitality applied to one and all alike. Innkeepers would, of necessity, find little custom among such people, and if they conducted establishments in the country there is little or no trace of them until many years later.

The German did his drinking in his hut, and while in performance of this pleasant ceremony he conducted his affairs. At general assemblies, such as would be convoked for the election of a chief, a declaration of war, or the formulation of a treaty of peace, drinking was universal: in fact, to the uninitiated, it would have appeared to be the principal business of the meeting. "Night and day," says the melancholy historian, "they drink; nor is it considered disgraceful or unusual. They drink when alliances are made or reconciliations consummated. They elect their leaders at drinking bouts and the same ceremony attends a declaration of war or the signing of a treaty of peace. Dissimulation is never a specter at their feasts. Wine lends zest to hazardous enterprises." Were it not that he qualifies his statement later on, by remarking that their love of strong drink never interfered with their fitness to

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bear arms either in single combat or in war, their survival amidst the ferocious enemies who hemmed them in would be a matter for wonder.

The toss-pots of German antiquity have become a tradition which has descended to their grand old universities, and has passed into the familiar saw: "four years of beer and four years of medicine." Julian, in his campaigns in the fourth century found them still the same; they drank wine until they could drink no more, and Procopius, in the sixth century, speaks of the Heruli in much the same way. These savages were not of the true Teutonic stock, however, and unlike the Germans, whose better natures were brought to the surface by wine, the Heruli only became more morose and treacherous, more malignant and perfidious. The conditions described by Tacitus persisted among the Germans until the times of Luther, save for a few instances, one of which is admirably described in the *Cloister and the Hearth*, and succeeding ages never failed to cite the customs of their ancestors in justification of their own worship at the shrines of Dionysus and Gambrinus, as the charming anecdote which follows, serves well to illustrate:

"Spalati once remarked, at the Court of Frederick, Elector of Saxony, that Cornelius Tacitus had written that amongst the Germans, it was not held disgraceful to spend the day and the night in a drinking bout. A gentleman chanced to overhear the remark and asked how many years had passed since that had been written. Spalati replied that fifteen hundred years had passed. 'Ah, your excellency,' the gentleman answered lightly, 'since plentiful

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drinking is a custom of a very ancient honorable race, let us not dispense with it on that account.' "

The Burgundians were the most cultured of all the barbarians, and the term "even-tempered," was not a misnomer when applied to them, yet candor compels us to confess that it was a polite euphemism when bestowed upon the broad faced Sicambrian Clovis, when that hardy savage submitted his person to baptism. These Burgundians had a special law which applied to hospitality, but it was not their intention that undue indulgence in drink, or excess of any kind, should sully its purity or impair either its effectiveness or the resources of the citizens. The purpose was to prevent impoverishment due to generosity, as the poor peasant or the burgher was little likely to complain of any expense incurred in that cause, even though it might be well nigh ruinous. The thirty-eighth provision in their code provided that all citizens were bound to defray the costs incurred by any one of their number, in entertaining a guest. "He who receives a stranger shall be reimbursed by the inhabitants, each being individually liable for his own share."

They may have been actuated by jealousy, fearing that others might be thought to practice like virtues, or, it may be that they did not want the people amongst whom they had established themselves by conquest to have any power whatsoever to levy upon their possessions for harboring strangers, or, a still more probable hypothesis if they may have feared the effects of an espionage which could operate, as in the past, through such means; in any case, they put a penalty upon any citizen who turned a

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wayfarer applying to him for food and shelter, to the house of any Gallo-Roman.

"Should any stranger come to any Burgundian and demand food and shelter of him, and should the said Burgundian direct the stranger to the house of any Gallo-Roman, if this be proved upon him, that Burgundian shall pay the Roman the sum of three crowns, and a like sum into the public treasury."

Even tempered they were, and the manners and refinements of the subject peoples came easily to them; they were debonair, cynically so, and they desired no open break with the races they had overrun, preferring the velvet glove to the hand of iron, and the "cross of gold to the crown of thorns." Their steady and peaceful penetration of the Roman provinces was accomplished under a guise of seeming politeness with a strict and unvarying attention to their interest that was not sated until they had occupied two-thirds of all the arable lands, and the greater part of the forests and orchards and vineyards. As guests they came, but with all the engaging ways of a lord of the manor. They saw to it that they were always the guests; they exercised their rights as such, and it might be said that the term "hospes," which designates both the guest and the master of the house in which he is received, can scarcely be deemed to convey the idea of a hospitality kindly and disinterested: an observation which any guest in a modern hotel will support with fervor and perhaps some bitterness, after an experience with the poisonous courtesy which characterizes them one and all. In this connection, I recall an anecdote relative to the late Henry Flagler, in Florida. His bill

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for the week was exorbitant, and he gently reproached the management on the grounds that he had more money than was asked of him.

As far as other barbarous peoples were concerned, many examples of regulations such as that which obtained among the Burgundians could be cited, but few there were as rigidly enforced, and strangely enough, it is among these former that we shall find such inns and taverns as had persisted after the strangulation of internal commerce. Almost without exception, they were establishments of no doubtful repute, their reputations were well earned; they were sanctuaries for thieves and gallows birds, havens of refuge for political malcontents temporarily out at elbows because of some playful little prank with a dagger, fences for all the stolen property in the district, and protectors of commercialized vice, then and always.

The Renaissance ushered in tremendous changes in art and in literature. Old ideals, especially those of Hellas took on newer and deeper meanings; their essences were better understood, and of themselves, they became, as never before, an integral part of the cultus of Italy and France. The very trend of thought underwent a change which has persisted down to the present day, but the tavern remained what it has always been, and what it always will be, until human nature itself has passed through a crucible which will refine it of all dregs, kill its sense of humor, and populate the civilized globe with a race of beings no less self righteous than any Pharisee or round-head, no less constant to its own self-

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love than any zealot of the litter. Perhaps it is not too much to say that throughout the earlier years of the Renaissance, and certainly, in the declining period of the Dark Ages, the monasteries fed and lodged only the rich and powerful or the very poor: the former because of their influence the latter out of more charity.

The prices charged for the necessities of life were beyond the means of the poor, and the inns and taverns were too mean and squalid to serve the squeamish tastes of court dandies and the higher nobility, whose skins, notwithstanding their indurated armor of dirt, were yet tender enough to suffer under the attacks of the voracious fleas and vermin, which, lurking in the bedding, or harboring in the dust under the dried rushes on the floor, played no unimportant part in the plagues that decimated the times. The inns and taverns, then, save only those dedicated to Mercury and Lucrum, accomodated the wealthier middle classes such as the merchants, artisans, and the like, and rarely entertained the higher orders, unless the fates took a hand in human affairs.

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CHAPTER I.

The first establishments with which we shall deal are those which persisted in the conquered territories of Italy. They were in the provinces under the dominion of Theodoric, and had, for many years, been highly profitable to their owners. The keepers of these hostels and pothouses were of the good old Roman strain, with perhaps a little of the Asiatic about them, as Petronius says. Steeped in all the cunning and vice of a civilization which had taught them the necessity of caution in plucking the finer fruits of success, their survival amidst the harder barbarian types is characteristic, but, like many adventures in modern business, their real profits were not derived from legitimate sources. Secure in the possession of their properties, they sought the free and untrammelled exercise of their ancient craft and artifice in the cruder times which had dawned, and the codes of the untutored barbarians presented little difficulty until their rapacity caused the wrath of Cassiodorus, minister of the Ostrogothic king, to fall as an avalanche on their devoted heads. Having resorted to the use of two systems of weights and measures, one for customers known to them, the other for strangers, they cheated the latter without the slightest compunction, and in this way paid their respects to those laws of hospitality which, to their conquerors, were sacred. Cassiodorus was an honest man; even in Republican Rome, he would have been

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distinguished. Intelligent, courageous, immovable, once he had made a decision, he was in every way a worthy minister of a Gothic monarch distinguished alike for an abiding love of truth and justice. Sainte Martin, the naive biographer of Cassiodorus remarks:

“He caused a moderate price to be charged for the necessities of life. Those who retailed such commodities suffered thereby no loss, although they made only a reasonable profit, while those who purchased had little or no occasion to complain. In his edict, in which he dealt with this subject, he specified the various commodities and set the prices to be charged for each, sentencing those who were guilty of infractions to pay a fine and, in addition, to be bastinadoed, reaching them all in this manner, as their fear of losing their goods, and their detestation of corporal punishment restrained the ardors of their rapacity and bridled it thereafter. And inasmuch as those conducting the hostelries placed an equivocal interpretation on the meaning of the edict, pretending that its provisions were applicable only to the citizens resident in the place, and not to strangers who chanced to lodge in their houses, and tavern keepers, in their dealings with the latter refused to heed the sumptuary regulations prescribed in the ukase, Cassiodorus promulgated a second decree, a veritable litany which should be printed in letters of fire and be the creed of all bonifaces since his time.

“Why,” he asked, “if a fair price has been determined upon in favor of a people living in peace in their country or village, should they not have compassion on the stranger and the wayfarer who must assuredly suffer enough elsewhere in catering to his

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necessities?" He maintained that they ought to receive a cordial greeting, one and all, to put them at their ease and soothe the aches of travel, homesickness and fatigue. Measures should be taken to lodge incoming travellers in comfort, and not to subject them to cruel and rapacious vexations which were totally unnecessary, if not actually tyrannical. They ought to be received as guests who were to pay not a single iota more than the prices stipulated, even as a guest who has been invited to partake of hospitality and to whom the host wishes to show favor is not to be the prey of a devouring avarice, a mere pigeon for the plucking. To do otherwise is but to follow the example set by the thieves and robbers along the great roads, who lure travellers into their clutches for the sole purpose of despoiling them. Nor should these tavern keepers imagine themselves immune or beyond the power of justice which has a detestation for places such as these. In summing up the situation he forbade them to tamper in any way with the prices fixed by the officials whom he had detailed to visit these establishments for the purpose of regulating them and everything in which they were concerned, in concert with the citizens and the bishops. From then on, during his regime, those conducting an inn or tavern were forced to content themselves with an honest profit, and no longer could it truthfully be said of them that they were the allies and friends of all the thieves and bandits lurking along the roads and exercising their phlebotomic calling."

Nor was the simile which Cassiodorus coined, between the tavern keepers and the outlaws exagger-

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rated or out of place, in the times with which we are concerned. In past ages, the tavern keeper had been guide, philosopher and friend to all the evil reprobates in his neighborhood. His establishment was the sanctuary and base of operations for every cut-purse who stalked his quarry along the trade routes or in the rear guard of the marching legions. He was their fence, and his commission was always paid. When Fulke, archbishop of Rheims was assassinated, an innkeeper divided the spoils with his murderers, and it was in an inn that his body, picked up from the side of the road, and gaping with innumerable knife thrusts, lay after its recovery by his followers. As receivers of stolen goods the taverns and inns had no equal, a fact well attested by the writings of Gregory of Tours, who tells of a robbery committed one night in the basilica of Saint Martin. The principals would probably not have been discovered except for a brawl that broke out unexpectedly among them, and which led to their capture in the tavern which served them as a sanctuary.

There is plenty of evidence upon which to base the statement that the taverns and inns of the fifth century were generally mere hovels, poorly roofed, and, thanks to that, perhaps less smoky than would otherwise have been the case, as we do not find chimneys in general use until many centuries later. Their wine was of the poorest, and such as there was, diluted or adulterated. They set a miserable table; the vegetables served were badly washed, carelessly prepared, and finally, poorly cooked. Saint Ausuin, bishop of Camerine, spoke from the bitterness of his soul when he denounced, in terms scarcely to be

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expected from a grave and temperate ecclesiastic, the villainy and double dealing of a tavern keeper at Nanni, who, after insulting the priestly stomach with adulterated wine, overcharged its furious owner and made him pay ransom for the privilege of being poisoned. The pork served in these establishments was leprous, and, in the light of later information, teeming with trachina; the beef was the cheapest obtainable, from lean cattle which were probably tubercular. Choice viands, such as poultry and game fowls were only within the means of the wealthy, whose income justified almost any expense necessary to satisfy their tastes in good living. Some idea of the cost of poultry may be derived from the fact that it was usually served on the royal table, and it has been said that a fowl, served after having been cooked with the spices and condiments in use in those times, would have cost not less than twenty-five dollars in our money.

It should be further remarked, in justice to royalty, that poultry, in those times, was served usually on special occasions only. Chilperic once had a misunderstanding with Gregory of Tours, and, wishing to appease the choler of the churchman, could find no better expedient than that of inviting him to the royal table. The invitation was respectfully refused, and the king, seeing his design on the verge of failure, besought the prelate to do him the honor of at least tasting a chicken pie. This was a very flattering invitation and one which the austere bishop could not find it in his heart to decline.

The best dish obtainable in the inns was fish, fresh from the river; and Ausonius, in his poem on

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the Moselle speaks of the pike caught in that stream and cooked in the ovens of the eating houses:

"The pike, that ravenous enemy of croaking frogs, repulsive is he, and not in use at our tables, but he goes to pot in the taverns which reek with his foetid vapor."

Should one be seized with a fancy for oysters, or with a desire for information as to the better grades, he wasted no time in questioning innkeepers. Delicacies such as these were refinements in which they were untutored, and on this account we find Ausonius who was well versed in good living, taking ample precautions against entrusting his person to their keeping or his stomach to their mercy.

"Never have I had to rely upon the taverns for information, nor upon such people; nor yet again upon such gatherings of parasites as Plautus has described. It always happened that on feast days I was entertained by friends who took their turns in inviting me to their tables, whether on account of a birthday, a wedding, or some day set apart by their ancestors."

In the times with which we are dealing, the greatest injury was done the inns by the universal custom of holding banquets and feasts of all kinds in private homes, without ever taking the proprietor into consideration or consultation; a thing which effectually prevented him from laying in a supply of good vintages, or serving delicacies or appetizing foods. Men did their heavy drinking at home, at their own tables or at those of friends or cronies. The worst of the kidney were, then as now, the solitary drinkers; but when some group did carry on in

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a tavern the lengths to which they sometimes went were not in the least circumscribed because the affair was taking place in a pothouse. The sermons of Saint Caesarius are striking, if not eloquent testimony of this and his biting invective against drinking and drunkenness might well have been placed in the mouths of our own spigot-bigots, though, truth to tell, he does not mention the taverns!

Augustine and Chrysostom permitted drinking in moderation, providing it was not done too publicly, but both were more inclined to stick to the golden mean than Caesarius. The ninety-first sermon of the latter is, throughout, a vehement arraignment of drunkenness in every class of society, but it is directed principally against those living in the country.

"When they have wine, when the vintage has ripened, or whenever they have brewed something to drink, they straightway invite their parents and neighbors, as though there were to be a wedding feast. The guests are entertained for four or five days, drinking as much as they can hold, and they will not leave off this deplorable debauch and return to their homes until all the brew they were invited to drink has been consumed."

And who are we to make odious and carping comparisons between our own arid era of spigot-bigotry, bootleggerdomain, scoff-outlawry and synthetic gin, and those more primitive and direct ages of the Merovingian dynasty, and conclude that, because they yielded to a custom as old as the product of the vine and drank and danced under the light of the harvest moon, perhaps with the very nymphs of the vintage, that their thirst was more ardent, un-

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bridled and lawless than our own? Reading further, we find the fiery old ecclesiastic censor alluding to a ruse designed to excite thirst in those unwilling to imbibe:

"They prepare ragouts," says mine author, "salt them well and spice them highly, that they may cause an irritating thirst and lead to more unbridled drinking!" Where are the pretzels of yesteryear; and what of the parched corn so salty that one always had to have another stein, yet so efficacious in preventing the consequences of uxorious despair or indignation by masking the odor of the breath? Alas, these objets d'art shall know our caravansaries no more. I fear.

Our good old churchman makes mention of still another detail no less curious than amazing:

"When the repast was finished, each guest, in order that he might get another drink, took the name of some saintly patron, and paid his respects by drinking a health!"

A very pleasant solution to a problem that is sometimes decidedly inconvenient; and as imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, let us refresh our memories by a perusal of Butler's *Lives of the Saints* or Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.

This little custom is in reality a very interesting survival in culture, and much might be written upon it. It is the expression of an epoch in which the forces of paganism were slowly but surely yielding to those of Christianity, and the ancient lowly still clung with fervor to the former, though their faith was beginning to take root in the latter; hence there was no sacrilege in the minds of those taking part in

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the ceremony of libation. Gentlemen, men of standing and wealth, and even great nobles were not in the least ashamed to enter a drinking bout, and when the affair was over, they were not less inebriated than the rest and scourged any slaves they suspected of having filched a drink of wine. Caesarius has something to say on that score also, and among other things, he propounds a riddle:

“How can any serf suffer in patience amongst so many because of the intoxication of a single noble, and, with that in mind, who can have the hardihood to get intoxicated?”

After this fine oratorical gesture of indignation meant to recall drunkards to the even tenor of a life of sobriety, he discusses the peculiar rivalries that spring up among toss-pots; their contests for supremacy in capacity, their sarcasms at the expense of such as drink moderately, if at all. In the ninetyeth sermon, after giving some little attention to the roistering toppers who compete in duels such as we have indicated, he mentions also a certain custom peculiar to the country, where the peasants were ever keen on such diversions. Three tipplers were chosen haphazard, each was compelled to down a quantity of wine determined upon in advance, but always a staggering measure:

“I am aware,” says he, “that in the orgies which you hold for one another, you invoke a practice derived from the superstitious usages of the pagans; one which was held in much esteem amongst them. From among your conviviais you choose three men to drink huge bumpers of known amount, either of

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their own free will, or by force; a custom as disgraceful as it is infamous."

Gormandizing and drunkenness were so deeply imbedded in the usages and habits of the Franks that, in order to secure consideration of anything whatsoever it was deemed necessary first of all to give a banquet. This was a formality which, in some cases, the law itself had not only countenanced but actually had come to require, and there is little evidence that shows any inclination to ignore an ordinance that sat so gracefully upon the shoulders of private Necessity and official Expediency. In those good old days, many an heir at law succeeded to a doubtful inheritance by virtue of a banquet tendered, and held his title until a more sumptuous entertainment was staged by a rival, the title passing from hand to hand until every heir was impoverished and the law had come into its own. Different ages breed different methods of procedure, and who shall say that this fine old custom had not much to recommend it? Our own ferocious inheritance taxes are based upon the same principles, but for the benefit of such of my readers as may be interested in the subject I respectfully refer them to the forty-sixth title of the Salic Law.

The giver, armed with his buckler, repaired to an audience with the count, to whom he submitted the judgment of three causes; then, taking a wisp of straw (*festuca*), he launched it against the breast of some man who was a stranger to him (*qui ei non pertineat*), and announced in a loud voice his intention of bestowing upon that man all of which he was possessed, or a stipulated part thereof, the sole con-

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dition being that the latter, in his turn, should remit it to another person also named in the declaration. Thereupon the three betook themselves to the home of the giver, the table was spread for three guests, to whom he proved that he was in complete possession of the goods transmitted. The second was then bound to render an accounting to the heir, whose intermediary he was in transactions with the giver, but before doing this he launched another wisp of straw against the recipient's breast, pronounced his name in a loud voice, and indicated the goods which he pretended to transmit to him in their integrity.

This was then the occasion of a second repast, again with three guests, chosen this time by the donee. He treated them as though he were master of the house, serving them with pultis, a stew which was the national dish of the Franks, and was a sort of porridge made of oatmeal and water. It was well-nigh indigestible, and bore a close resemblance to the charcoal burner's standby which, in the Norman dialect is called "poult" but which Dr. Johnson, in the first edition of his dictionary characterized as fit for horses in England but for men in Scotland. This poult was a necessity at the dinner as the transfer could not have been legally made otherwise. A diet such as this would require a good washing down; the laws provided for it and the courts awarded it, and you may be sure that the Franks did not fail to carry out the spirit and the letter of that admirable regulation. In case the bequest was disputed, and a legal entanglement resulted, the donee, by the testimony of the three witnesses, was able to offer evidence that everything had been faithfully performed. The

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Franks drank heavily at their meals and whenever one of their tribesmen took possession of a new abode, he gave an elaborate feast when he hung his pot-hooks, as the proverb has it, and perhaps it is from the ancient feast of poult that many of these ceremonies and dedications took their origin.



Chaucer's Pilgrims

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CHAPTER II.

Many and interesting are the source documents which show the intimate touches and contacts which had almost the force of habit in the Dark Ages. A traveller was at liberty, without the slightest embarrassment, to ask the most searching questions and the most intimate favors of almost any hostess or hebe in a tavern; that the transient might be a mere guest of a day mattered nothing. In an ancient poem called *Porcheronne*, in the dialect Provence, preserved in the collection of Damase Arbaud, we find the following passage, which, for the amusement of the reader I will quote in the original:

Digatz, damo l' houstesso
L'y a degun per couchar?

In Ami and Amile, Count Amile, sleeping in the palace of Charlemagne, does not give evidence of the slightest surprise when an unexpected visitant enters to disturb his slumber; he merely contents himself by begging her "in the name of God, the Son of Mary," to retire if she is a married woman, or if his fair visitor is

Daughter to Charlemange who holds
The realm of France within her power;

but, if she is a simple chambermaid, he begs her to remain: "Tomorrow," says he, "thou shalt have an hundred sols in thine alms-purse." He receives her

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silence in a manner proper to a man of courage, which, indeed he was.

Peire de Monrabel, sent on an embassy by Charles Martel to Girart de Rossillon did not turn away from any of the pleasures that his host, Aimes de Bourges, procured for him on his passage, and when he rendered account of his mission to the king, in the presence of the assembled court, he was very careful to relate every courtesy which had been extended him by de Bourges, his host:

Ben me conreut Aimes a mon talent;
Colget me en un lit d'aur e d'argent,
E donet me donzela tan convinent
Qu'anc non vistes genzor, s'eu ne vos ment.

In Aubri the Burgundian, it is no less a personage than the niece herself that Lambert d'Oridon places at the disposal of Aubri, his guest. With conditions such as these could we expect to find a regime less lax in taverns? No. And the material we shall produce, whether it be a fourteenth century manual of language or some fable such as that of *Courtois d'Arras*, which we shall cite copiously in due time, will all show more and more clearly the singular amelioration of manners and customs which makes our own age so different from that of the good old times. In the ninth century also, the inclinations toward debauchery are inveterate; every class of the sacerdotal hierarchy was corrupted to such an extent that the authorities of Angiers, in drafting laws against contraventions by the clergy, made them apply to the bishop and to the clerk.

"If any bishop, or any man serving under his

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orders is an habitual drunkard, if any priest or any deacon shall vomit after excesses at table, he shall be sentenced to undergo a penance of forty days duration, and a clerk twenty days for the same offense; or, if the council should so recommend, he shall deprive himself of bacon for seven days. Any layman convicted of drunkenness shall submit to thirty days of penance, and in addition shall be deprived of bacon, beer and wine. If he has led his neighbor astray, he shall fast ten days additional for the offense."

These penalties are severe, particularly those relating to the lower orders which were outside the fold, but perhaps necessity and experience made them what they were. Why, for example, was it deemed necessary to punish offenses against sobriety less severely than failure to keep fasts or other omissions in the season of lent? To sins of that sort the church was inexorable, and the sacred historians, gliding gently over the punishments imposed by the diet upon debauched priests, write at great length and with careful precision of the agonies in store for those who do not obey the mandates of the church. Gregory of Tours resorts to terms of extreme violence in flaying drunkenness, and indignantly records the excesses of Ebernulph, a servant of Chilperic. The same author also speaks scathingly of the orgies in which the Breton priest Winoch took a leading part, in his life of Saint Martin, and under the gratifying title of Apostle of the Gauls, he takes pleasure in painting in hideous colors, the vice of drunkenness. Here, however, his indignation comes to a halt; he speaks of no miraculous punishments in store for

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them, he cites no examples from their distress, he draws no moral from their transgressions. In the case of Roccolene, Duke of Main, however, there was no such difficulty, and a gentleman who did his duties as a christian was punished with death "for having eaten young rabbits during the season of lent."

Thus it appears that sins were not regarded in the same light by the church, it depended upon who committed them, and infractions of its prescriptions were punished more severely than mere offenses against such sobriety or chastity as was to be found in that age. Yet it is always well, in estimating the trend and depravity of an age, to take its vices into consideration. In many respects the early mediaeval church was an ideal mother; not only were her clergy permitted to frequent the taverns without danger of reprimand, but the dram shop was permitted to invade her sanctity, and on special days, the doors of certain of the basilicas were in fact but front entrances to taverns, open to all, where wine flowed in torrents. Some churches there were which maintained shameless taverns on their greens or in their closes, throughout the entire year (*intra sanctos ambitus*); places every whit as disgraceful as any pothouse in the vicinity. This was also the case with certain monastic cloisters. In the middle of the market town which has grown up around the rich abbey of Saint Riquier, there was a street of innkeepers. Each day these scabby tenants were obliged to pay their collective rentals with thirty pints of beer, as the good monks were too squeamish to take their payment in any other coin. The matter

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was thrashed out in the council which promptly passed special regulations against a practice so disgraceful.

In the eighth century tavern keeping within the sacred area was defended, and even Saint Remy favored the merchandising of alcoholic liquors within the churches. The outstanding example, however, is that of Saint Abraham, who, on feast days gave drink to the people from the steps of his house of worship, and the scandal, magnified because of patronage so august, became so deeply rooted in the diocese that the holy bishop was forced to resort to a miracle to destroy it. Quoting Flodoart, a chronicler of Rheims as his authority, Rouillard relates the particulars in his *History of Melun*.

"The flask of wine which the sainted Remy had blessed, and bestowed upon Clovis the king, could never be emptied nor could the contents deteriorate. There was no way in which to measure what had been drunk, and the flask miraculously filled itself, but should some ecclesiastic sell wine from it in his church, and thus fail in true respect, it would fail him even as the commonest flask in the vilest public drinking hole."

The friars of the ninth century were particularly keen on poultry because, after the times of Charlemagne, this delicacy was forbidden them, except during the seasons of Christmas and Easter. The council of Aix la Chapelle, animated by the desires of powerful laymen, passed an ordinance in the year 817, in which the matter of fowl was dealt with at some length. Charles the Fat, as was to be expected, went further than a mere authorization of such a

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dispensation, and gave orders that his intendants should furnish the poultry necessary to the proper celebration of these great festivals, to the convent of Notre Dame at Soissons, and to another such institution at Saint Denis; nor was this by any means the measure of his charity, he furnished, in addition eleven hundred eggs and five hogsheads of wheat "to make poult," as the phrase reads, in the source documents of the years 862 and 868.

As the orthodox churchmen had an almost unlimited power to traffic in dispensations, whether amongst themselves or amongst the great unwashed public, it follows that they were rarely handicapped in their guzzling. Every day they dined on fat mutton or fowl, in season and out, with little or no regard to the fasting periods. With jesuitical sophistries and philosophical subtleties they defeated all sumptuary laws whether ecclesiastic or civil, and the world was their oyster as never before. We shall now introduce an excerpt from the *Chronicles of Charles IX*, by Prosper Merimee, to give color to our theme, and perhaps to point a moral, his coup-gorge, (would that we had an English word as appropriate and sonorous), his cut-throat Bois-Dauphin, being the very flower of that horde of errant and witty knaves that enriched the colorful panorama of mediaeval hoboemia and the ages that followed.

I cannot say whether the solemn baptismal scene described by Merimee was original with him, or whether it came to him through some old legend, but be that as it may, we may rest assured of one thing: the monks of the ninth or any other century before the reformation, would have blithely baptized every

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plump pullet and christened it Carpam or Percham, had their ingenuity and wit been on a par with their gluttony.

In a cabaret, on the bank of the Loire, a short distance from Orleans, in the direction of Beaugency, a young monk wearing a brown robe furnished with a great cowl, turned half way back, was seated at a table, his eyes contemplating a breviary with an attention extremely edifying, as though he had chosen a darkened corner in which to read. He wore a string of beads, each of which was as large as a pigeon's egg, and an ample provision of medals of saints, hanging from the same cord, jingled at each movement he made. When he raised his head to stare out of the door he displayed a finely chiseled mouth, ornamented with a moustache which curled upwards like a Turkish arch, and so elegant that it would have done honor to a captain of life guards. His hands were very white, the nails long and trimmed with care, and nothing about him announced that the young cleric, following the custom of his order, was accustomed to wield either the spade or the rake.

A coarse, fat-jowled peasant woman, who performed the double function of servant and cook of the tavern, of which she was also the mistress, approached the young recluse and, after having made him an awkward reverence, said:

"Will you not order something for your dinner, my father? Do you not know that it is past noon?"

"Is the boat for Beaugency likely to be long delayed?"

"Who can say? The water is low, and one

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cannot go as he would. And besides, it is not time for it. Were I in your place I would dine here."

"Very well! I will dine; but have you no other room in which I may eat? I am conscious of an odor here which is not very agreeable."

"You are rather squeamish, my father. As for myself, I smell nothing at all."

"Has anyone been singeing hogs near this tavern?"

"Hogs! Ah! That IS a good one! Hogs! Yes, it is a good guess; they are hogs, right enough, though, as people say, they dressed in bristles of silk when they were alive. But hogs like those were never meant to be eaten. They are huguenots, saving your presence, my father, huguenots who were burned at the edge of the water. There were a hundred of them and it is their bouquet which you smell."

"Huguenots!"

"Yes, huguenots. But do you attach any importance to a thing like that? No reason there for loss of appetite, and as for changing the dining-room, I have but the one, and you will oblige me by being content with it. Pah! The Huguenot! He smells badly if he smells at all. But perhaps, if they had not been burned they might have stunk to some purpose. They were piled upon the sand this morning, a high pile too, as high as that chimney."

"And did you examine the corpses?"

"Oh! You ask me that because they were naked. But saving your reverence, the dead do not count; they had no more effect on me than would a heap of dead frogs, if I should see it. They must have been happily occupied at Orleans yesterday, for the Loire

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brought us a fine lot of heretical fish and, as the water is low, they are found on the dry sand every day. And yesterday as the miller's boy was looking to see if he had caught any tenches in his net what should he find but a dead woman who had a gaping halberd wound in her belly. Take my word for it, the thing had gone in at the front and come out between her shoulders. But he would have liked it better, just the same, if he had found a big carp. But what will your reverence have? You do not wish to faint from hunger? Would you like a cup of Beaugency wine with your dinner? That will put a heart in your belly."

"I thank you."

"Very well. What will you have for your dinner?"

"The first thing handy. . . . it matters little to me."

"What, no appetite yet? I have a well stocked larder, look you."

"Very well, give me a chicken, and leave me to my breviary."

"A chicken, your reverence! A chicken! Ah that is a good one! Chicken is not to be taken from the hooks for your teeth in time of fast, unless you have a dispensation from the pope to eat meat on Friday."

"Ah! I am distraight! Yes, today is Friday. Friday thou eatest not meat. Give me eggs. I thank you from my heart for having saved me in time from the consequences of having committed a sin so grave"

"But their worships will eat our chicken on a

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fast day," said the cabaretier, in a low voice, "if one does not publish it of them, and when a mischievous bit of bacon finds its way into some poor woman's soup, they raise a rumpus that would turn your blood." So saying, she occupied herself with the preparation of his eggs while the cordelier applied himself to the reading of his breviary.

"Ave, Marie, my sister," cried another monk, entering the tavern at the very instant that dame Marguerite took hold of the handle of the skillet, in readiness to turn a large omelet.

The new arrival was a fine specimen of an old man, grey bearded, tall, imposing, robust, and he had an exceedingly red face; but an enormous plaster, which concealed one eye and covered the greater part of his cheek, attracted instant attention. He spoke French with ease, but a slight foreign accent was perceptible in his speech.

The instant he entered, the young monk lowered his cowl so that he could not be seen. Dame Marguerite was greatly surprised at this as the churchman was a mere chance visitor and had raised his cowl because of the heat. Why then should he lower it at the appearance of a confrere in religion?

"By my faith, good father," said the hostess, "you have arrived just in time for dinner, and you will not be kept waiting long. You will find yourself amongst old friends."

Then, addressing the young ecclesiastic:

"Is it not true, your reverence, that you will be enchanted to dine with his reverence? The smell of my omelet begins to attract, and I did not spare the butter."

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The young priest responded with timidity; "I fear," he stammered, "to inconvenience Monsieur."

The old churchman raised his head at this; "I am but a poor Alsatian monk," he said, "I speak bad French and I fear that my company would scarcely be agreeable to my confrere."

"Come!" said dame Marguerite, "shall we then stand on ceremony? None should have his own table and his own bed among monks, and especially monks of the same order," and, taking a stool, she seated herself at the table in such a way that she faced the younger prelate directly. The elder sat at his side, evidently greatly embarrassed and seeming to be torn between desire to eat and a certain repugnance at finding himself face to face with a confrere. The omelet was served.

"Come, my fathers, dispatch your benedictions quickly, and tell me whether my omelet is good."

At the word benediction, the two recluses became still more ill at their ease.

"You are my elder," said the young man, "the honor of saying the benediction belongs to you."

"By no means! You were here before me; it is for you to say it."

"No, I pray you."

"I shall not say it, certainly."

"It is not necessary."

"Do you want to let my omelet get cold?" demanded dame Marguerite; "since when have two Franciscans grown so ceremonious? Let the elder say the benediction and the younger the grace."

"But I do not know how to say the benediction except in my own language," the elder objected.

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The younger man started in surprise and darted a stealthy glance at his companion. Meanwhile the latter, joining his hands devoutly, commenced to mutter in his cowl such words as no one could understand. Then he seated himself and in less than no time and without a word said, he swallowed three-quarters of the omelet and emptied the bottle placed before his companion. The latter kept his nose in his plate and did not open his mouth except to eat. The omelet finished, he rose; and, joining his hands, he spoke very rapidly, jabbering certain Latin words of which the last were "et beata vicera virginis Mariæ." They were the only ones which Marguerite could understand.

"What curious graces, my good father! Saving your reverence, it seems to me that those you have given us here are not the ones our cure pronounces."

"They are the graces of our convent," the young Franciscan replied.

"The boat," demanded the other monk, "is it due to arrive shortly?"

"Patience," cried dame Marguerite, "it will come in very soon."

Judging by the jerk of his head, the young churchman seemed provoked, but not a single observation did he hazard, and, taking up his breviary, he applied himself to reading it with redoubled attention.

As far as the Alsatian was concerned, he turned his back upon his companion and commenced to roll the beads on his chaplet between his index finger and thumb, while his lips moved, but not a sound came forth.

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"These are the two strangest monks I have ever seen," thought dame Marguerite, "and the most reticent," and, seating herself at her spinning-wheel, she commenced spinning. A quarter of an hour had passed in a silence broken only by the whir of the wheel, when four armed men of a very evil appearance entered the room. On catching sight of the two ecclesiastics they lightly touched the brims of their hats, and one of their number, saluting Marguerite by the familiar "my little Margot," demanded wine first of all, and dinner as quickly as it could be gotten ready, "for," declared he, "my spittle is so dry that it makes my throat raw whenever I move my jaws!"

"Wine, wine," murmured dame Marguerite, "that is soon had here, Monsier Bois-Dauphin,* but is it you who would pay the score? Jerome Credit is dead, you know and moreover, as I am an honest woman, it is equally true that you already owe me more than six crowns for wine and dinners and suppers.

"Equally true, both the one and the other," answered Bois-Dauphin with a laugh; "I say that I owe you two crowns, mother Margot, and not a denier more."

"Ah! Jesus Maria, what can I say?"

"Come, come," growled Bois-Dauphin, "put a term to your scolding, old hag. Six crowns be it. I will pay them to you, Margot, out of what we will spend here, for I have plenty of coin to clink today, though we profit but little from the calling we follow. I wonder what those dogs did with their silver?"

* Prince of the woods; taken in the sense of "wood colt."

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"Possibly they swallowed it, as the Germans did," remarked one of his comrades.

"Hell!" snarled the leader, watching them narrowly, "the honest pistoles on the carcase of a heretic are too good a stuffing to be tossed to the dogs."

"How she did scream, that minister's daughter, this morning," said a third.

"And that hulking monster!" chuckled the last, "he was too big to sink beneath the water, how I did laugh!"

"You have been well employed then this morning?" queried dame Marguerite, who had returned from the cellar with full bottles.

"So, so," replied Bois-Dauphin. "Men, women and little children; all told, we have thrown twelve into the water or the fire but Margot, the unfortunate part was that they had not a single farthing, except for one woman who had a few baubles, but the full value would not buy four shoes for a dog."

"Yes, my father," he ran on, addressing himself to the younger of the two monks, "we earned many an indulgence this morning in slaying those heretical dogs, your enemies."

The ecclesiastic regarded him for an instant and resumed his reading, but the breviary was seen to tremble in his left hand, and he closed his right fist like a man agitated powerfully by some emotion.

"Speaking of indulgences," continued the leader, turning to his companions, "do you know that I would like to have one so that I could dine plentifully this very day? I see some pullets in dame Margot's back yard that tempt me sorely."

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"Now you're talking," one of his band chimed in, "let's eat, we will not be condemned for that. We will go to confession afterwards, and there's an end of the matter."

"Listen, comrades," said another, "an idea occurs to me. Let's make the fat papas give us a dispensation so we can fare on the fat of the land."

"Yes! If they can," another agreed.

"By the bowels of Our Lady," swore Bois-Dauphin, "I know a better method than that; I'll whisper it in your ears."

The four footpads immediately got their heads together while Bois-Dauphin explained his design to them. They received it with boistrous guffaws of laughter, but one of their number had his misgivings.

"That is an evil plan you have thought out, Bois-Dauphin. It will result in misfortune. As for myself, I want no part of it."

"Hold your tongue then, William. How can it be a grave sin to make a man smell a platter with a poignard?"

"All very well, but a tonsured"

Although they had spoken in low tones the two monks seemed to have read their intentions beforehand by certain words of the conversation, which they had caught.

"Bah!" sneered Bois-Dauphin, in a louder tone, "and anyhow, the author of a crime must bear the blame, and that shall be none other than I."

"Yes! Yes! Bois-Dauphin is right," the other two cried.

Bois-Dauphin got to his feet immediately and

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strode out of the room. An instant later the chickens were heard squawking and the brigand reappeared, carrying a dead fowl in either hand.

"You outlaw," squalled dame Marguerite, "killing my chickens, and on Friday! Don't you see what you have done, you brigand?"

"Silence, dame Margoton, you know that I'm a bad boy to cross; don't assail my ears. Leave me alone and get to your spits."

Then, approaching the Alsatian friar:

"Here, father mine, do you see these two creatures? Well, I wish you to do me the honor of baptising them!"

The monk drew back in astonishment, while the other gripped his book and dame Marguerite heaped further insults on Bois-Dauphin.

"What?" demanded the ecclesiastic, "I baptise them?"

"Assuredly, father mine. I will be their godfather, and Margot there shall be their godmother. Behold! These are the names which I give to my goddaughters: this one shall be christened Carpa, and that one Percha.* Two jolly names!"

"Imagine anyone baptising chickens!" said the monk with a laugh.

"Yes, father mine, and hang it, get to work quickly!"

"You wretch!" cried dame Marguerite, "do you think I will tolerate such doings in my house? Do you think you are among jews on a sabbath, to baptise animals?"

"Seize me that wrangling old shrew," Bois-

* Carp and Perch.

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Dauphin ordered his comrades; "and you, father mine, can you read the name of the cutler who made this blade?"

While speaking, he flourished his naked dagger under the nose of the old priest. The younger straightened up on his bench but, as if influenced by some prudent reflection, he immediately relaxed again, and determined to have patience.

"How do you want these fowls baptised, my child?"

"Why that is easy, to be sure; baptise them just as you baptise us and other children of our women. Sprinkle a little water on their heads, and say:

"Baptizo te Carpam et Percham: just like you say it in your gibberish. Come Little John, fetch us that tumbler of water, and all of you doff your hats and gather around! Noble God!"

To the general surprise, the old cordelier took a little of the water, sprinkled it on the heads of the chickens, and pronounced rapidly and very indistinctly something which had the likeness of a prayer. He finished with:

"Baptiza te Carpam et Percham," resumed his seat and took up his chapelet again with admirable calm, as though he had only done something common-place.

Sheer astonishment rendered dame Marguerite speechless. Bois-Dauphin had triumphed.

"Come Margot," said that gentleman, tossing the two fowls to her, prepare this carp and perch for us; it is an admirable fast to keep."

Marguerite, however, notwithstanding their bap-

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tism, was obdurate and refused to regard them as food for Christians, and not until the bandits had threatened her with maltreatment could she make up her mind to prepare these synthetic fish for the spit. Meanwhile, Bois-Dauphin and his fellow rowdies were swilling deeply, and making a great racket drinking one another's health.

"Listen to me," shouted the leader, striking the table a heavy blow with his fist to secure silence. "I propose drinking the health of our Holy Father the Pope, and to the death of all huguenots. Our papas twain and dame Marguerite shall drink with us."

This suggestion was hailed with acclamation by the other three roisterers. He arose, tottering a little, for he was already more than half seas over, and, from a bottle which he held in his hand, he filled the glass belonging to the young friar.

"Come good father," said he, "to the hic hic hoc holiness of ish ealsh I have it wrong to the hel healsh of Hish Holiness and the death"

"I never drink between my meals," the young monk cut in coldly.

"Sho, of coursh! But you will drink or the devil take me, you'll shay why!"

So saying, he placed the bottle on the table and, taking up the glass, he brought it to the lips of the friar who was bowed over his breviary. A few drops of the wine fell upon the book. The monk rose quickly to his feet, seized the glass, and in place of drinking, he dashed the contents in Bois-Dauphin's face. Everyone roared with laughter. The church-

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man, his back against the wall and his arms crossed, gazed fixedly at the rogue.

"Do you know, my little papa, that your little joke does not relish me? Day of God! If you were more than a mere monkling, I would teach you well to know our world." When he had delivered himself of this, he stretched out his hand to the young man's face and tweaked the ends of his moustache with the tips of his fingers.

The figure of the latter took on a regal aspect. With one hand he grasped the insolent ragamuffin by the collar and, having armed the other hand with a bottle he struck the villain's head so shrewd a blow that Bois-Dauphin fell senseless to the ground, covered at the same time with blood and wine.

"Well done, my bravo!" shouted the old prelate, "you work havoc for a shaveling."

"Bois-Dauphin is dead!" cried the three bullies, seeing their comrade motionless, 'we'll give you a good combing, you cur!"

They drew their swords, but the young monk with surprising agility turned up the long sleeves of his robe, gained possession of the blade of Bois-Dauphin and, with a manner that beckoned all the resolution in the world, he placed himself on guard. At the same time his confrere drew from beneath his robe a dagger the blade of which must have been eighteen inches in length, and with a martial mien, took his place at the younger's side.

"Come on, gutter-snipes," he roared, "we'll teach you to live and show you who we are."

In a trice, the three cut-throats, wounded or dis-

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armed, were obliged to make their escape through the window.

"Jesus! Maria!" cried dame Marguerite, "what champions you are, my good fathers! You do honor to our religion. But there is a dead man here, for all of that, a very disagreeable thing for the reputation of this tavern."

"Not a bit of it! He's not dead," said the elder monk. "I see him stirring, and I'll go and give him extreme unction." Thereupon he went to the wounded man, whom he took by the shoulders and, putting the edge of his dagger to his throat, would have done his duty by cutting off the rascal's head had not dame Marguerite and his companion restrained him.

"What would you do! Good God," she cried, "killing a man, and worse still, a man who passes for a good catholic!"

"I suppose," said the younger monk to his confrere, that pressing affairs call you to Beaugency, as is also the case with me. There is the boat, let us hasten."

"You are right, and I am with you," answered the elder, wiping his dagger and returning it to its place beneath his robe. Then the two valiant monks, having settled their score, took the road towards the Loire together, leaving Bois-Dauphin in the hands of Marguerite, who first ransacked his pockets to pay herself, and then proceeded to dig out the pieces of glass with which his calvarium bristled."

The monk Gorenflot, in Dumas, had a similar adventure, inspired doubtless by the preceding, or by the source from which it came. The scanty supply

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and the prices demanded for poultry prevented its general use on the tables of the inns and taverns; a lack which was the principal obstacle to the fullest gastronomic enjoyments of the clergy, but they could satisfy their thirst at considerably less cost. The vintages then were as abundant as they are in our own times, nor was the price of wine higher then than now, or at least than it was before the advent of prohibition. Notwithstanding the numerous royal and ecclesiastical duties levied on the sale of wine; amongst others, the tax which, according to Gregory of Tours, originated under Chilperic I, and which took one-eighth of every harvest, those who bought by the hogshead paid no more than seven deniers, which, bearing in mind the purchasing power of money then and today, would come to about twelve and one-half dollars gold, a very moderate price when compared to that of wheat which, in 868 A. D. cost about fourteen times as much and which, within a single decade reached a ratio of forty-two to one. The wine was a commodity of such ready sale in almost every market that the ecclesiastics believed themselves justified in making these economic conditions a trifle more difficult; it was not deemed necessary to serve always the finer vintages such, for example as the exquisite product of Dijon which was a worthy ancestor of the wines of Burgundy, the virtues of which Gregory of Tours extolled so highly, or the delicate vintages from Champaign, the merits of which were even then so well known that Pardulus, bishop of Laon, offering advice in matters of hygiene to Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, remarks:

“Take wines of medium quality, wines which

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are neither too strong nor too weak, grown on the hillsides and not on the summits of the mountains nor in the depths of the valleys. Those to which I refer are the growths produced on Mount Ebon at Epernay, or those of Milly and Comicy in the district around Rheims. As for the others, they are either too strong or too weak, and seem to me to be full of humors."

Some of the wines of Auvergne were well liked by the monks, and in the banquets of the times, they flowed freely. There were also some wines, such, for example as the "brumalis canna," an effervescent beverage made of barley, ginger and fruits; and "claretum," a mixture of wine and honey to which a relish was imparted by certain balsamic plants; the "moritium," or mulberry wine, the cordial flavored with fennel which is probably the ancestor of our modern liqueurs, and was so esteemed in the twelfth century. Finally there was the "alixone," of which mention is made by Aldric, in his testament. That these beverages were far from agreeable to the palate of the epicure is inferred from a statement made by Raoul Tostaire, a monk resident at Saint Benoit sur Loire, who curses heartily the vile cider served him between Caen and Bayeux, at a tournament held in Normandy.

"I enter the mediocre hovel of the notorious adulterator and I am famished; I ask for wine and am served with a cider of some sort, expressed from bitter and acidulous apples; this I put to my lips, having thought it was new wine."

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CHAPTER III.

In chapter XIV of that collection of source documents of the reign of Charlemagne, from which we quoted under the head of "Villis," are to be found many interesting particulars having to do with beer and brewing. The Frankish baron regarded malt liquors with disdain and his wife or mistress looked upon them with actual contempt, as the only beverages evil enough for slaves. An exceedingly curious anecdote, taken from the History of Christian Flanders in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries, bears out our statement admirably. We shall quote . . . and comment:

"A Flemish nobleman named Gomer was returning from a mission which had taken him some distance from his holdings. He came to the bank of the river Dieppemorch, and there met one of his slaves, covered with bruises. The man's head had been shaved, as it would have been had he been caught red handed in some mischief, and punished in this way. Bitterly he deplored his lot, as he followed the plough. Gomer, who had a kindly heart, was greatly moved. 'Who has treated you in this way, my fellow Christian?' he asked. 'Who shaved your head?' The slave would make no answer at first, but at last, after his master had firmly insisted, he replied: 'It was your woman who tormented me while you were away; and she stripped your entire household.'

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"‘I am home,’ Gomer answered him, ‘and I will render you exact justice.’ Arriving at his house, he called all his slaves to be assembled, cross-examined them on what had taken place, and ascertained the names of those who had suffered most.

"‘Have patience,’ said he, ‘from now on you shall fare more happily. I will invite all of you to my table today, you shall bring your beer with you, and I will drink with you! my mistress shall do the same and, if she finds the slightest fault, if she cavils in the least at drinking beer, do not hesitate, every mother’s son of you, to swear before her face that the beverage is excellent.’

"Thus did this old feudal lord avenge the wrongs his haughty queane had done his retainers. He permitted them to give her the lie to her face and condoned their conduct. First of all, however, he reproached her sternly and harshly for her conduct, saying, among other things:

"‘God will pay you out in coin of your own minting, if he is just. You have heaped injury and iniquity upon inferiority; goodness, and charity to others, are foreign to your nature, and you have failed to remember that, slave or freeman, all are part and parcel of Jesus Christ.’

"The dinner was served, the servants taking their places at the table. The beer was opened and at the very first mouthful the baroness protested against the bitterness of the detestable beverage, but the guests with one voice declared it delicious. She flew into a frightful rage and jumping to her feet, left the table and the room. Gomer remained, drank with his retainers, and promised them aid and pro-

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tection for the future. He then reimbursed them the losses they had sustained, through the machinations of his queane."

Women of this type, so admirably described and so mercilessly caricatured by Juvenal in his sixth satire, have sometimes swayed the destinies of nations. Haughty, self-sufficient, more ruthless than the male because they are generally immune from personal chastisement, they require neither meditation nor a knowledge of the facts to pass judgment. One such queane contributed much to weaken the Eastern Empire under Justinian. I refer to the amazing career of Antonia, wife to Belisarius and his household. Another, there was whose disdain, carefully matured and played upon by the Iron Chancellor, brought about the battle of Sedan and the humiliation of France. The little anecdote of the Flemish baron speaks with a deeper meaning than one might think; it is a feudal reminder of social conditions in which a matron's waning beauty might well be fraught with consequences, dire if not actually fatal to the luckless handmaiden who, lavishing her finest skill in hair-dressing, and hoping to achieve a triumph of art, creates instead, a masterpiece of realism.

Precarious indeed was the situation of the serf, and little indeed had he the expectation of justice under such a regime. Gomer was a true feudal lord and he went the limit of feudal indulgence when he permitted his valets and scullions, his hog reeves and his hangmen, to give his shrew the lie. There is one other point of interest in this little episode and that is the attitude of the noble lady towards the beverage of her inferiors. Unlike the Roman women, to

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whom wine was so long forbidden, the barbarian women drank heavily, but the upper orders were not accustomed to brewed liquor. Wines and spirits they loved and nothing was permitted to thwart their appetites or curb their drunkenness.

The saintly Lieutbirg, assailed in the midst of her austerities by a horde of rats, finally drove them away by virtue of her prayers and litanies but the infernal gnome who had sent the rodents against her excoriated her former mode of life as follows:

"You were not always so squeamish. Once upon a time, when you were supping with one of your familiars, you found a dead rat in the wine.* You laughed, took it by the tail and tossed it away with the remark that it was not impure and that it amounted to nothing. Afterwards you drank, contrary to the precepts of the religion which you profess today."

The drunken women of those times did not, however, make the taverns the theatres of their activities; they held their orgies either in the home or in the sheltered isolation of the gynecaeum,** where absolute privacy afforded them ample security in which to effectuate other infamies and relationships. If we meet women in the inns or taverns, it is not because they go there for drinking and gormandizing, as is the case with men. Their reason is commercially unethical but everlasting. They are of the women whose name is legion, members of the oldest profession known to the world, the veritable answer to the thou-shalt-nots of a thousand centuries. Bound to

* Origin of the Rat Mort, a famous Parisian cabaret.

** Apartments set aside for women.

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the wheel, as the Buddhist sages would say, they contend with beasts as ferocious as any they knew in the amphitheatres of old. They play the-will-to-live against the-will-to-propagate.

The taverns have been ravaged with fire and sword, but they have not been refined, they flourish amidst an alien race but they are no purer than aforetime, lupanars, houses of assignation, where the proprietor fills the double role of Ganymede and pimp, and the slavey, whom we might, with strange propriety designate by another name, is an alchemist of no mean attainments; she transmutes the base metal she touches into gold, a true daughter of Midas, but alas, how unworthy a successor to the glorious Phryne, the aesthetic and far-seeing Aspacia, the lovely Esther, or the magnificent Theodora.

Hrosvitha, a German or Bohemian abbess of the eleventh century has bequeathed posterity a picture in which the ward of a holy recluse, quitting her nun's cell and life of austerity, trips blithely down the glittering path to live the hetaera's life of east. The scene of the drama is laid in a tavern of the eleventh century, and, as the abbess writes of her own times, the sketch is of value.

The leading female character, accustomed to habits of severe propriety, and sickened of a destiny filled with promises of future damnation, has run away and taken sanctuary in an inn, to live by the passions of strangers, aided and abetted by the tavern keeper who markets her charms, furnishes a setting for the orgies that follow, and increases the revenues of them both. The chamber in which she entertains her visitors is aloof and well guarded

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against intrusion. The furnishings are plain but comfortable. The nights are devoted to luxury, but the grisly specter of Satiety grins leeringly through the grated window. The poor girl has begun to feel the hideous reality of her position, but the blandishments of the mercenary boniface have worked upon her love of ease and she has remained. Her awakenings are accompanied by a dull ache that lends an added chill to the pale but radiant dawn of the morning after. The recluse, who calls her "daughter," and whose deepest longing is for her sanctity to equal his own, grieves terribly, and asks news of his lost sheep of all that pass by. At last, after two lagging years have passed, and he has almost given up hope, a friend, who has chanced to see Mary in her infamous retreat, and has learned all he could about her present way of life, informed the hermit of everything.

Friend: She lodges with a go-between who takes in great sums every day from her lovers!

Abraham: From Mary's lovers!

Friend: Yes.

Abraham: Who are they?

Friend: They are legion.

Abraham: Woe is me! Oh, Merciful Jesus! What monstrous thing do I learn! She, who was raised to thy bed, lives with lovers and with strangers!

Friend: Such was the ancient custom among the harlots; they made themselves subservient to the passions of strangers.

Abraham: Give me a saddle-horse and a mili-

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tary cloak, that I may enter her presence in the guise of a lover.

Friend: Here are the horse and the habit.

Abraham: Give me also a wide-brimmed hat to conceal my tonsure.

Friend: Yes, you must ward against recognition.

Abraham: Ought I not also take all the money I possess, even to the uttermost farthing?

Friend: Yes, indeed, otherwise you will not be able to disport yourself with Mary.

The anchorite takes his departure, and, with his arrival at his destination, the scene changes to the tavern. Then commences the action, scene following scene, all curious and informative because of the details preserved in them, and the bawdy tavern of the eleventh century is illustrated with an admirable realism so vivid that it might be taken by implication, as a reflection on the early life of the authoress herself.

SCENE V.

Abraham and the Inn-keeper.

Abraham: Hail! good mine host!

Inn-keeper: Who calls me? Hail, guest.

Abraham: Have you room for a traveller who would pass the night with you?

Inn-keeper: Yes. Our humble hospitality is denied to none.

Abraham: That is very agreeable.

Inn-keeper: Enter, and supper shall be prepared for you.

Abraham: I thank you deeply for your gracious

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greeting, yet I would demand even greater service of you.

Inn-keeper: Anything you ask shall be granted at once.

Abraham: Pray accept this little token of my esteem, which I offer, and arrange matters so that the lovely girl who, as I am told, lodges with you, will take a place at our table.

Inn-keeper: Why have you come to see her?

Abraham: Because I would take the keenest pleasure in making the acquaintance of a woman whose beauty has been so greatly praised.

Inn-keeper: Those who vaunt her charms do so justly because the loveliness of her face eclipses that of all other women.

Abraham: Let her enter, that I may burn with love for her.

Inn-keeper: I am astonished that you, old and decrepit as you are, can talk of love for a young woman.

Abraham: To see her was my only reason for coming here.

SCENE VI.

Abraham—The Inn-keeper—Mary.

Inn-keeper: Come down, Mary, come down, and let this neophyte admire your beauty.

Mary: I am coming.

Abraham: (aside) What self-control I must exercise, and with what firmness of spirit I must arm myself, when I see her, whom I brought up in the solitude of my hermitage, transformed into a courtesan! But this is no time to allow my face to reveal

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what passes in my soul. I must conceal my thoughts, under an air of feigned gayety, I must mask the bitterness of my grief.

Inn-keeper: Rejoice, Mary, and be of good cheer. It is usual for young men of your own age to make love to you, but your fame has travelled so far that even grey-beards search you out and come to deluge you with their passion.

Mary: All who love me receive from me a love equal to their own, in return.

Abraham: Come hither, Mary, and give me a kiss.

Mary: Many sweet kisses will I give you, and more will I do; I will fondle you and twine my arms around that neck bowed down with years.

Abraham: I am more than willing.

Mary: What is this odor that I sense? What is this wonderful perfume that I inhale? That peculiar fragrance that reminds me of mine ancient abstinence.

Abraham (aside): For the present I must keep up appearances and abandon myself to a happy drinking-bout like a wild young spark, so that my melancholy may not betray me and cause this shameless one to retire to her retreat.

Mary: Alas! Me miserable! What have I fallen into? Into what abyss of perdition have I rolled?

Abraham: The place where a multitude of drinkers assembles is meant for weeping and wailing.

Inn-keeper: Why do you sigh, Mary? Why do you shed tears? Have you not dwelt here for two

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years, and in that time I have never known you to complain nor to be sad.

Mary: Oh! Would to heaven that death had taken me three years since, then I had not descended to a road so criminal.

Abraham: I have not come hither to bewail your sins with you but to share your love.

Mary: A pang of repentance made me sad and caused me to speak thus, but let us sup and live for joy, for, as you have reminded me, this is not the time or place to deplore our sins.

Abraham: We have dined well and drunk deeply, thanks to your liberal hospitality, O worthy inn-keeper! Permit me to rise from the table, that I may retire and stretch my weary body on a bed, and regain my strength in sweet repose.

Inn-keeper: Surely, if it pleases you.

Mary: Rise, my lord, rise, I will go with you to the bed-chamber.

Abraham: That is what I desire; nothing could get me to leave here unless you would accompany me.

SCENE VII.

Mary—Abraham.

Mary: Here is a chamber where we shall be comfortable; here is a bed which is not made of uncomfortable mattresses. Be seated, that I may spare you the fatigue of removing your sandals.

Abraham: Make sure the bolts are fastened first, so that no one can come in.

Mary: Don't be alarmed as to that; I have

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locked everything so that no person can come into our room easily.

Abraham: (aside) Now the time is arrived to take the great hat from my head and show who I am. (aloud) O my daughter by adoption, oh, thou greater part of my soul! Mary! do you see in me the old man who nourished you with the tenderness of a father, and who betrothed you to the only son of the heavenly king?

Mary: Oh God! It is Abraham, my father and my mother who speaks to me! (she is terribly frightened and trembles).

Abraham: What has come to you, my daughter?

Mary: A great misfortune.

Abraham: What led you astray? Who seduced you?

Mary: The same thing that made our first fathers fall.

Abraham: Where is the angelic life you led on earth?

Mary: All has been lost.

Abraham: Where is your virginal modesty? Where is your admirable chastity?

Mary: Lost.

The remainder of this interesting tableau is not pertinent to our subject, but in order that those who are curious may know the outcome I will give the substance briefly. The anchorite gets his soiled dove out of the dirty cot. He is more charitable to her than is the wont in like cases in our day. They depart for his desert fastness, she on his horse, he afoot. As they disappear down the winding road we will leave them to one better able to judge both im-

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partially. In this little episode we find a complete tableau of the daily life of an eleventh century harlot of the tavern. Not a detail has been overlooked, and the abbess did not intend to describe a scene strange and unusual. No matter what tavern one came to in those times, this scene would re-enact itself, but with a less poetic exeunt omnes.

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CHAPTER IV.

The Prodigal Son has come down through the ages, and the setting in which we find him is always the same. He frequents the tavern, generally one of the better sort, not such as were found in the age of the Merovingians, but one of the more pretentious places, where garlands were draped for festivals, where every corner of the room had its broached tun covered with ivy, and surrounded by a laughing, rollicking party of roisterers, intent only upon eating and drinking and singing, and, if the tavern hebes were gracious . . . but Villon shall tell us of them in his own way and in his own time. Perhaps a wild boar will be served whole, in his shaggy coat, his tusks ornamented with little baskets of keepsakes that dangle merrily, perhaps the unconscious generosity of the monarch may have provided a deer to be barbecued or made into a venison pasty a yard in diameter and six inches in depth; in any case, the dagger will serve as the carving knife but the guests will use their fingers in lieu of knives and forks, which, after the decline of Roman civilization, did not come into general use in western Europe until centuries later.

The first thing handy served for napery, whether it was the frowsy head of the tavern scullion, the skirt of a mantle or the nearest sleeve. The wine cups may be the horns of a wild bull, the brims edged with silver or gold, and the tips set off

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with spheres of the precious metal, often smooth, but sometimes hand beaten, as was the custom amongst the Goths and Germans. The tavern keeper is also there, standing on his threshold, and inviting the passing traveller to enter, just as his Roman co-conspirator had done before him; he cries his wares from a full gullet and his assurance has lost nothing of its poise with the passage of the ages. To the guest of imposing mein he makes a thousand oily reverences; he hastens to place at his disposal a chamber with a bed soft and warm, "high with straw and soft with feathers," to quote him literally; the pillow perfumed with violets, the finest and most subtle perfumes for laving hands and face, an electuary, and rose water. Such were the refinements for the convenience of wealth in the twelfth century, and it is into an atmosphere such as this that we hasten to introduce one of our heroes, the young and courtly prodigal son of the famous mediaeval tale, *Courteois d' Arras*.

With youth singing in his blood, clad in his showiest finery, and with his heritage of sixty sous clinking merrily in his pouch, the gallant of chivalry sets out upon his travels and comes to the tavern. He has listened with some impatience to the advice of a father who viewed life through blue glass and lacked the finer perceptions so necessary to the fullest enjoyment of the world and its pleasures. He is welcomed by the host who is the personification of a hospitality that conceals under an air of profusion a strict attention to its interest. The establishment and all it contains belongs to the guest; very well, the young man requires something to drink first of all. He is served, and, enchanted at the attention

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lavished upon him, he preens himself on having set out to see the world despite the opposition of his father. "One does better here than in church," he writes, seeing the tavern through eyes of youth, and, with Gautier d' Aupais, in another legend, he might have been tempted to say:

"My faith, what an excellent thing a tavern is! You are well received, you are served, and, from keeper to kitchen scullion, they one and all lavish compliments upon you. There is not the slightest embarrassment, you merely pay."

The importance of this last point, however, had escaped the notice of our young blade Gautier, who failed to regulate his score by his means. To procure funds for a liquidation, he sat in on a little game with some strangers and promptly lost the stake with which he had entered; his mantle went next, then his surcoat, and finally his horse was led away by the goddess of his evil fortune. The landlord failed to receive the news of his catastrophe in the spirit of sportsmanship which should have characterized his dealings with the youthful optimist; when he should have come to the rescue, he beat him unmercifully, kicked him out, covered with bruises, and taunted him with insults. A very sad experience, and one which our chivalrous Courteois d' Arras is about to undergo, although his purse is better furnished upon his arrival at the tavern. However, the daughters of joy and the goddess of chance still chaperone the tavern from austere propriety, and mask the snare set for his unwary feet.

First of all Perrette trips in; a very pretty lady is she, a wench with a keent scent for such full

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blooded prey, and her hunting instinct has brought her to the inn. She approaches our hero, catches his eye, and smiles a smile that promises everything. She looks upon him with an outward seeming of regard, and he, presenting a silver goblet, makes her a thousand compliments upon her beautiful eyes and exquisite grace.

"How happy would I be," she assures him, "if only I had a gallant so handsome! There would be nothing I could wish for, and not a duke nor a count in all the realm of France could dress so well."

Then, as the heart of our hero begins to palpitate, and his passions to kindle, a second hebe happens in. She is hand and glove with the first, a glistening foil to set her off. They exchange a lightning glance full of meaning, and the latest arrival, after announcing that she entered the inn by merest chance, is persuaded to take a seat beside our hero, in whose willing ear she whispers a thousand things agreeable to his merit and the charm of his company. She cannot congratulate him enough on his great adventure. If his heart is great and true, if he has faith in himself, he can have no surer guide. As round after round is consumed the two women redouble their flatteries and enticements; more wine is drunk, they dine together and at last, that complete and a sympathetic rapport may be established, a veritable amorous communion, as it were, they drink from the same cup, their lips caress the same place on the brim, and they eat from the same dish, each feeding the other some particular dainty, and sometimes both nibble tidbits from his lips or he from theirs.

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The utter familiarity of a feast of betrothal is here before our eyes. The wenches desire above all else to be beforehand with the landlord. They have caught the scent of pelf and they exert themselves to the utmost to make his purse disgorge. A little game is proposed, our hero accepts the gage as under no circumstances can he disappoint a lady, and they all sit in on a game of morelle. But this device, even fortified by trickery and cogged dice does not produce the desired result with sufficient rapidity, so they pick his pockets and make a hasty get-away. After their departure the host comes and gives the final stroke to the unfortunate Courteois. He demands his money, and as the poor devil has not a sou in his pockets, the taverner proceeds to strip him and throw him out, almost naked, upon the great road.

It is only another re-incarnation of the Prodigal Son of the Holy Writ, who, after having scorned the wise admonitions of his father, finds himself stripped of money and resources, and arrives at the stage of repentance over-late, to weep for his mistakes, and to realize the truth that earth bears little balsam for them, and that little harsh. Dire necessity drives him to hire himself to a farmer, and in the humble capacity of hog reeve, he exists on a diet of hard barley-bread bristling with straw. His quarters will be well ventilated, and he will be able to get an uninterrupted view of his surroundings, thereby. His meals will not be embittered by pomp, and if he has the right stuff in him he will not return grovelling to his father's door. No matter where we read of this character, this picaresque adventurer in the land of

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allegory, the end is always the same, and follows the tradition of the evangelist. The Prodigal Son was a weakling, and it is not to such as he that the tribute written above was dedicated.

The setting, at all times and in all lands, has been the tavern; the host is always true to himself and to his antecedents, and the harlots, whose sweet predaciousness leads him to beggary are ever priestesses of Dionysus and Lucrum. Whether he amuses himself in some remote posada in the Spanish lowlands, lying at ease in a steamer chair, watching the radiant iridescence of a fountain while lithe bayaderas dance the bolero to the cluck of castanets and the pulsing thrum of guitar and harp, whether the latticed seclusion of a lovely Japanese teahouse covered with wistaria, has claimed the weary traveller who all too soon will succumb to the witchery of a dozen exquisite geishas, and from his pile of soft thick matting drink in with his sake, the reedlike and penetrating sexiness of the subtle semisen, geisha or bayadera, they are sisters under the skin, as Kipling well knew, but for all our vaunted occidentalism, the oriental approach will be subtler. One difference there is: the horde of vagabonds and parasites that characterized the mediaeval taverns will not be found in the finer teahouses, and this in a land that, ages before the expedition of Perry had a very fine system of post houses and inns.

The Prodigal Son has often been made the subject of sermons, some of which emanated from the finest minds of the church. Bossuet and Teniers, Laud, Spurgeon, and Talmadge have preached eloquently of him, and the old French classicist Steph-

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anus, in his apology for Herodotus introduced a discussion of the parable; a round of feasts and drinking bouts, with strolling players, trumpets, and one-sided socialists sitting around the great circular table to do him reverence with tongue in cheek, until his bounty ceases from want of means.

Whatever the tavern, the company will be of the same sort, hard-bitten and highly polished vagabonds like the Spanish cavalier whom *Gil Blas*, another prodigal, entertained at dinner, jugglers whose slight of hand can charm the purse from the deepest pocket, pretty ladies whose finesse is all too rarely recompensed in the proper coin. One instance there is, in the days of Ronsard, in which the heroine was paid in coin of her own minting. She had insinuated herself into the good graces of an Italo-Greek smuggler who had long been deprived of the society of women. She took him to her apartment, in order that he might see more of her, and where she could make better use of her opportunity. When her guest was asleep she arose softly and rifled his pockets of their gold. The Greek watched her through half-closed eyes, following every movement, as she opened a crypt in the wall and deposited her spoils. She then returned to the couch and fell asleep. At dewy dawn her paramour bestirred himself, dressed carefully, as he did not wish to disturb her rest. He opened the crypt, recovered his property, and reimbursed himself liberally for his mental anguish. Then, waking her, he thanked her from his heart for her unstinted hospitality, and departed, thanking his gods for their goodness and loving care.

A taverner exercised a variety of callings, all

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disreputable, and on his head the cumulated infamy of the whole district descended in case of trouble. Daudouville in a brilliant discourse entitled "The Way to Avoid Melancholy, or a Method of Governing and Enriching All States by the Ordinance of Reason," has a very happy passage full of biting invective directed against the individual and species of tavern keepers.

Thou taverner who lurkest in thy bordel stale,
Thou perverse imp of evil life, and able,
Thou doest much for which thou must give bail
To free the agents living in thy stable;
Thou envier of those who wealth possess,
Thou all-desiring, thou who must confess
Thy tavern but a lurking hole for things,
Thou universal fence, where Evil brings
The spoils of crime to decorate thy table.

Manys passage in the romance of Garin de Lo-harain prove even more vividly the class and character of the frequenters of taverns, driven by economic pressure, anathema to the police, those sempiternal representatives through which society, built on selfishness, deals at first hand with incorrigibles. That its representatives often are as cowardly and as venal as the master who pays them must of necessity follow. The boniface was generally shrewd, and he was certain to be a rascal, hence his establishment was the only resource left to light fingered gentry. Had not Villon's ten fingers come to his rescue the poet might have starved, at one period of his life, while the solid burgher, slaving and saving throughout his span of life, depriving himself even of its



An Inn—(French National Library)

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necessities, furnished the funds for the campaigns of Charles the Bold, or the sinews that enabled Oliver le Diable and his oily master, Louis XI, to play the enemies of the realm against one another, and dictate to them when they had become impotent.

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CHAPTER V.

The lot of the innkeeper became more and more difficult; the commercial instincts of the police became keener and they harrassed the poor boniface for tribute in return for an ambiguous protection. The vultures of the law were no less reluctant to forfeit bail for a non-appearance, and the Augean stables of governmental authority were not cleansed until the French Revolution washed out a multitude of abuses in blood, much of which, alas was innocent. Thus has organized society ever fed upon its own selfishness and defeated its most cherished ends.

No discussion of the sociology of the times would be complete without a mention of Manual Galopin, whose surname has survived in the language of France, and has come to mean the very essence of tavern frequentation. His favorite Dionysic grot is admirably described by the old poet, in the Romance of Garin de Loherain; and Manual is found:

"With three dice in his hand, and three Circes to minster to his pleasures." The term "galopin," has taken on different meanings in different ages, and has at last taken the meaning of "gamin," a word well enough understood in every tavern and wherever drink is sold in small quantities. Furthermore, it has been said that the measure known as the galo, galona, or in English, the gallon, of which Du Cange speaks in his article of "galopin," is derived from the

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name and social habits of this old mediaeval wencher and gamester.

With the passage of ages, the term came to mean cabaret-boy or any scullion employed in a cook shop. In addition to the vagabond, ribald strumpets, jugglers, and the like, the tavern rout was swelled by great numbers of errant minstrels peripatetic fiddlers, clamorous and frowsy singers, of both sexes or of neither, who thronged these places for lack of welcome elsewhere. Here they could forget themselves in the maze of the dance, cadge drinks and meals and, if the forelock of opportunity was long enough, pick the pockets of patrons, to the accompaniment of picaresque recitals, folk songs, and the like. In every age the musician has made his headquarters at the tavern; whether it is some troubadour, coeval with Roland, who sings the wild heroism of the hero of Roncesvalles, or some gaunt minnesinger who evokes from twanging harp the minor chords that tell the barbaric exploits of a Barbarosa. The fluted vault of some grand old castle may ring with epic paeans, but entertainment such as this is habitually met with in the tavern. As early as the Sixth century, Taliessin excoriates the wandering "klers," bands of Armorican musicians, because of their penchant for singing in taverns.

"These klers," says he, "follow vicious customs; their vaunted melodies are without the redeeming charms of art; they celebrate the glory of mollycoddle heroes; they circulate lying reports and rumors of the day; they violate the commandments of the Creator; they seduce married women by tender words and recondite speech; they corrupt the purity

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of virgins; every propriety of time or place they violate in their feasting and revelry; honest citizens they hold in contempt; they waste their lives in useless employments; they spend their nights in drinking and their days in sleep; idlers with nothing to occupy their leisure; they hiss the church and haunt the tavern; miserable beggars form their society; they are followers of carnivals; every perversity they hold with, and they yield to every mortal sin; birds of passage, they make their way through every village and hamlet of every country without the formality of a passport or other document of authority; if some novel frivolity or silly fashion is born they adopt it as soon as they see it: birds fly, bees make honey, fish swim, reptiles crawl, but these mountebanks whom we know as "klers," hardy vagabonds and specious mendicants, produce nothing unless it be anguish and grief."

In the thirteenth century, we find Lanza Marques lodging a complaint against Vidal, a troubadour who, in his farces had the sarcastic eccentricity to follow the classical example set by Labzerius in dealing with the great Caesar. The double-edged compliment was not relished by the mediaeval aristocrat, who worked himself into a furious rage when the mime, in the role of emperor, addressed him in terms of biting reproach:

"We shall enact the role of an emperor who possesses neither judgment or knowledge, nor memory. A drunkard greater than he never sat upon a throne and never shall; no greater paltroon ever bore lance and shield; there never was a greater rascal than the poet who shall compose chansons in his

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honor; wine he shall have, and an old red cowl without a single ribbon; a long cane shall be his lance and with that in 'rest,' he shall traverse the realm of France in utter safety."

Another troubadour, Rainolds d'Ayet, satirized Magret in the same mordant manner. The latter seems to have been a rival, and he is said to have died in Spain, at some hospital, from an illness brought on by debauchery and suffering, caused by his too assiduous frequentation of cabarets. From this it is fairly evident that habits of this sort were classed as vicious and unusual among the troubadours. The authors of the Literary History of France manifest a contempt for drunkenness no less abiding.

"The troubadours did not commonly sing of wine and the vintages, a trait which is one of the outstanding features of their century."

With the trouveres, or Northern bards, the situation was reversed, and almost to a man, their entire class might with justice be reproached for addiction to drinking and loose company. It was a common boast among them that they spent their substance in the taverns, and in the Romance of Bau-
duin de Seboure, one of this harmonious fraternity frankly informs his listeners of this fact, in one stanza of a realistic ballad :

And, if I have your silver,
Pray do not grudge it me;
For all that I have taken
The tavern takes from me.

A few passages such as the foregoing make it

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easy to understand the satiric anathema of one of these witty gentry. He laughed at everything, even himself, and he rises to the greatest heights in dealing with ex-communication, that dread subject of ecclesiastical solemnity that had for ages reduced even crowned heads to servile obedience. In the role of priestly confessor, with something of the exorcist, and much of the Casanova about him he parodies the verbiage of the age.

"I excommunicate the rich man who dines alone the drunkard who spills his wine or destroys the vineyard, the gentleman who denies himself access to fiddlers when they come to sing the songs of Roger, Roland or Oliver.

"I excommunicate the gambler who does not leave his victim jacket and mantle, the juggler who does not prevaricate a little, the monk who does not love the table a little, the litigant who does not lend himself to a false oath.

"I excommunicate those that detest narrators of tales and legends, those that drink water when they could drink wine, those that play at dice, the authors of my ruin, and every monk that has yielded indulgences to the nobility. And finally,

"I excommunicate all those who cheat or who in any manner whatsoever steal one from another, excepting only the strumpets and their friends; as for them, may God maintain them in peace, and may they all their lives wear chaplets of roses and flowers."

To go from tavern to tavern, and at this time there were some four thousand in Paris alone, enlivening the evenings, dancing, drinking and feasting,

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with patrons of whatever rank; these were the essential duties that fell to the profession of strolling fiddlers, masters or apprentices. In 1421 a regulation was drafted "for the reformation of the calling and for the common good of the king's fiddlers and of the thirty-seven jugglers, male and female, of the corporation. The document specifies the manner in which they shall conduct themselves and entertain in the taverns for the entertainment of such as foregather there either by chance or design. It regulated everything having to do with apprentices, they being powerless to sign any contract, or even to advertise their skill in their chosen profession, save by playing alone. It was forbidden them to attract attention to themselves by word or by sign. The finished performer of the Middle Ages labored under the same social disadvantages as did the tavern keeper in classical Rome. He could formulate no contract for his offspring, wife, divorced daughters, or those whose husbands had gone to foreign countries. In case inquiry was made of a member of the guild by someone desiring performers and musicians for an entertainment, the reply was:

"Noble sir, by ordinance of our master it is not permitted by me to mention my name, but if you desire fiddlers or jugglers go to the street of jugglers, where good ones are to be found."

In passing we should take note of the powerful teamwork of guilds such as these in the last decades of the Dark Ages. One huge organization there was, the members of which wore the scallop shell as a sign of admission. This powerful body was in reality

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a great co-operative society of organized crime. Its members belonged to all professions and to all nations. It co-ordinated the activities of individual and guild alike, particular interests being subordinated to the common good of the whole body, and many an errant knave, by virtue of his usefulness alone, escaped an affecting scene with the dyspeptic and melancholy Tristan l'Hermite, or the chuckling malignity of his fellow hangman Trois Eschelles, whose poisonous pity was as sweet as the odor of a lethal orchid, and whose loving care and tender attention in the last hours of one accused of crime were perhaps the precedents by which their brothers of today are guided in our most carefully restricted circles.

In addition to the jugglers, mimes, strumpets and vagabonds of the times, we find other and more sinister visitants to the taverns. They trafficked in pardons and indulgences, false relics, love philters, charms, restoratives for impotence, and the like, and their speciousness was on a par with their depravity. These were the "tricaleurs" or sellers of treacle, perfumes, and like commodities, and the "pardoners" who was a rogue of the most indurated type. He sold pardons and indulgences; false relics and almost anything demanded of him; as a blackmailer he has had few equals, as his position gave him the finest opportunity to accumulate dangerous bits of back-door history and slanderous gossip. These quacks, especially the pardoners, were always high in favor at the taverns, and their scandalous traffic in dispensations raised the wrath of Martin Luther against the Holy See.

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The taverns, from their very nature, were bound to be the best theatres for the activities of these gentry. None stood more frequently in need of indulgences than the bonifaces and their hangers-on; the former being almost a feudal lord in his domain, stood most in need of a little leeway as he generally had the weather gauge on all comers, but in the pardoner, he met his match, and when we find an instance in which some hardy and subtle rogue has paid the tavern keeper in coin of his own minting, the story is sure to be worth the telling. A scintillating farce, preserved in a manuscript in the British Museum, illustrates admirably the attitude of the better informed French mind towards these charlatans and representatives of providence. Delightfully entertaining, it sparkles with realistic conversations and recriminations indulged in by two wise old he-goats of this devilish flock, vendors alike of charms and relics, both equally false, and a slight knowledge of the psychology of selling will enable the reader to plumb their tactics in the cabaret. It is rich in humor and satire, the cast being made up of three characters; a treacle seller, a pardoner, and the mistress of the tavern. This little survival of by-gone age was published at London, anno 1849, with a commentary, but will be more readily procured in Viollet le Duc's *Ancien Theatre Francais*, vol. ii, p. 50 et seq.

The triacleur, or seller of unguents and the pardoner, who deals in relics, find their present and future interests menaced by an immediate disagreement, each breaking in upon the other, and each

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attempting to prevent the other from selling his wares.

"I want you to see the comb of the cock that crowed at the house of Pilate, and here is a piece of planking from the hull of the great ark built by Noah! Behold, gentlemen, a seraph's feather stamped by God, and here's the very pebble with which David slew the giant Goliath! Don't think it is a joke, here they are for you to see!"

This is too much for the other rogue and he breaks in:

"Blood of Gog! It's only the quill of a goose he had for dinner!" At last, their community of interest brings their common sense into the ascendant and they go together to the tavern to drown their differences and present, as ever, a united front to stupidity and superstition. They end by palming off an old pair of disreputable shoes on their plump hebe, and thus are we afforded the delectable spectacle of cunning Self-Interest and Roguery Refined drawing blisters each upon the other.

Triacleur:

Will it not profit us to rendezvous
More pleasantly with wine and goodly cheer?
I pray you, come, good sir, where privacy
Will let us talk to better purpose. War
'Tween such as we were foolish and inane;
Why strip each other when there wait without
Such maudlin and full blooded mobs to bleed?

Pardoner:

Methinks, good sir, your speech is full of sense;
Pray let us dine, for there are those from whom
The likes of we should naught demand but wine

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And hospitality, to bolster up
An understanding equal to our needs.
To confreres such as those, t'were well to say
"Where can be had the wine of Orleans?"

Hostess:

Here, goodly gentlemen, I have it here;
I pray you enter, here I have the wine.

Triacleur:

You have the wine! And I, the gift of tongues
To hear it mentioned! Guard me well this chest.

Hostess:

Good gentlemen, pray tell me, if you will,
What issue has come up between you two?

Pardoner:

What issue, madame? Saving your sweet grace
I am a pardoner, at your command,
At least, so I believe myself, and hold
The blessed tenor of my way; but he
That joins me is a triacleur.

Hostess:

By good Saint Jean, I have a sister sweet,
My jolly Mary, would that she were here;
In truth she will be grieved she did not feast
And entertain you well, as is her wont;
For bumpers pass from hand to hand, when she
Foregathers with such fitting company.

Triacleur:

And how is that?

Hostess:

She is an artist and few peers has she
In pulling teeth; the deepest rooted yield,
So subtle is her touch.

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Pardoner:

God's blood! A very sister of our kind.

Among a miscellaneous list of sacred relics mentioned in this rascal's stock in trade we find the following:

The snout of the porker
That belonged to His Holiness Saint Anthony
himself.

The comb of the cock
That crowed when Pilate passed sentence.

A piece of the hull
Of the great ark built by Noah.

A feather
Of one of the seraphs, stamped by God.

The very pebble
With which David slew the giant Goliath

The variety offered to the market was as infinite as the ingenuity of the purveyor, which alone limited its scope, as the credulity of the public was then, as now, without limit, and the sarcastic historian dealt with the subject with a lighter touch than might have been expected. Had the sale of merchandise such as this taken place only in the taverns, to the keeper or to his satellites, the evil would have been far less grave, and might, with some propriety have been said to possess more than a germ of poetic justice, as the jocund host dispensed vile tinctures which in time, would corrode the copper-lined stomachs of even the hardest of his patrons. Such was not the case, however, and every walk of life was preyed upon by these mis-

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creants, and, as always, the poor were the greatest sufferers.

Not until we reach the age of Rabelais and Lazzarillo de Tormes, do we find the pardoner at a disadvantage. The many-sided Panurge matches sophistries with him and wins hands down, the ingenious glutton palming his penny in the plate so adroitly that it seemed to be a silver coin, for which he brazenly took change and left a white, which was the smallest coin current. He merely fulfilled the prophecy of the holy man who said to him, as he offered the relics for his kiss:

"Centuplum accipies" thou shalt receive an hundred fold.

Our own Chaucer, in the *Canterbury Tales*, has drawn a marvelously realistic picture of a pardoner; a description which becomes more masterful still as other evidence comes to light.

"Suche glaryng^e eyghen hadde he as a hare," says the poet, in describing the feature from which one can learn most, but we will let the pardoner speak for himself:

"Lordyngs," quod he, "in chirches whan I preche,
I peyne me to have an hauteyn speche,
And ryng it out, as loud as doth a belle,
For I can al by rote which that I telle.
My teeme is alway oon, and ever was;
Radix omnium malorum est cupiditas."*

His posturings and turnings, from side to side, gesticulating, appealing to the superstitious terror and monumental ignorance of his audience are evi-

* The root of all evils is cupidity.

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dence of his knowledge of human nature, a subject with which his calling of necessity made him overly familiar.

“I stonde lik a clerke in my pulpit,
And whan the lewed people is down i-set,
I preche so as ye have herd before,
And tell hem an hondred japes more
Than peyne I me to strecche forth my necke
And est and west upon the people I bekke,
As doth a dowfe, syttyng on a berne;
Myn hondes and my tonge goon so yerne,
That it is joye to se my busnesse.”

Boccaccio introduces a pardoner named Fra Cipolla into one of his tales. Chaucer's fellow had “heer as yelwe as wex,” but his Italian confrere is a little red-nosed man, radiating good humor. So entertaining was his conversation and so magnetic his personality that, for all his rascality, he was guide, philosopher and friend to all the countryside. Gulligut gentry such as these must have been excellent tavern companions, as their versatility was as astounding as it was impudent. Chaucer's pardoner exhibited a piece of the sail of Saint Peter's boat, but Fra Cipolla went him one better.

“I will, as a special favor, show you,” said he, “a very holy and goodly relic which I myself brought aforetime from the Holy Lands beyond the seas, and that is one of the Angel Gabriel's feathers, which remained in the Virgin Mary's chamber, whenas he came to announce to her in Nazareth.”*

* Payne's Boccaccio, Vol II, P. 280, et seq.

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The speech put into the mouth of Chaucer's pardoner is a masterpiece of realistic self-revelation and brazen effrontery. He sits upon a bench before the tavern and the poet and his companions, the knight, squire, friar, and host approach. From them he has little to fear, as his hold upon the popular mind is firmly established. The ale foams in the tall old tankards; in *vio veritas*, he becomes loquacious and vanity impels him to tell every phase of his holy calling. He turns a powerful and pitiless spot-light into every dark pocket of his soul. He is a wonderful story teller, with a wealth of mysterious detail in his mind, a companion in whom Robert Burton would have found much to cure his melancholy; one who could have discussed rascality with Jerome Cardan to admiration. Notwithstanding all their villainy, it is almost with regret that we read their doom in the proceedings of the Ecumenical Council of Trent, July 17, 1562.

"As the councils of the past have found no means to reform the pardoner, and as such expedients as have been tried have proven futile; rather than that a condition so scandalous should persist amongst the faithful, and the matter grow worse, and as no hope seems left, it is decreed that from this time on, and in whatever clime the Christian religion is practised, that the name 'pardoner,' and the profession there, shall be abolished henceforth and forever."

It is of interest to note that Chaucer's pardoner pays the host the compliment of soliciting him first of all, as he was the most steeped in evil:

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"I yow assoile by myn heyh power,
If ye woln offre, as clene and eke a scler
As ye were born. . . .
I rede that oure host schal begynne,
For he is most envoliped in synne.
Come forth, sire ost, and offer first anoon,
And thou schalt kisse the reliquis everichoon,
Ye for a grote; unbocle anone thi purse."

There were, then but two qualifications necessary in dealings with the pardoner and others of his ilk, ready money and stupidity; and if the intending purchaser had several reasons for declining a bargain, let him but state that he had neither the coin nor its equivalent, and all the others mattered nothing. Encounters such as that between the pardoner and the treacle vendor remind one either of a battle between a centipede and a scorpion, or of a vicious ass eating nettles.

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CHAPTER VI.

Of the gambling that ran riot through all mediaeval taverns we have, as yet, had little occasion to speak; but the practice was universal, dice being the favored medium. Cogged dice were in general use, and the art of palmistry was carried to a high degree of excellence. The game called "tremereel," in which three dice were used, is constantly mentioned in the contemporary writings. Merchants had loaded dice on sale, and in one document there was found a complete catalog or stock list in which "dice of Paris," and such as "always fall to the ace," are offered for sale. Many a sharper has corrected the impious tendencies of Fortune by means of educated cubes, and in the times of Villon we shall see the great inconvenience was caused by the discovery of a basketful of such merchandise in a house.

There is a story current that a certain Italian, hearing rumors of the high play at Paris, went there incognito, took samples of the dice and returned to his own country. Here he produced loaded replicas and got them introduced into certain establishments in France, through agents. He then followed in their wake and is said to have reaped a rich harvest as the just reward of his foresight. The thing became such a menace that it finally interfered with the ecclesiastical revenues and the church authorities, through Saint Louis,

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outlawed dicing and even the manufacture of dice in the areas under their jurisdiction. In 1279, dicing statutes equally severe were imposed upon the Jews of Pamiers. They were forbidden to indulge in any games in which dice were necessary during periods of festivals or at night, but legislation of this sort was not more efficacious then than at the present time.

The games continued to rage, not only in the taverns, where strumpets and their bullies congregated, but also in the cloisters, where the monks were better skilled with chessboard and in fingering a cornet than in thumbing the breviary. It was not at all unusual for a churchman to encounter a gambler in some game of skill (for severe practice had practically eliminated the element of chance), and then it was a case of diamond cut diamond. The old fable of the cure and the two daughters of Midas furnished a curious example of one of these ticklish and ardent bouts. Midianites and priest, contending for the prize, strive to get the better of one another, and all correct the errors of Chance by adventitious means. At last the cure is picked clean, having lost even his horse, such confidence had he in his spotted allies. After the game he discussed the evil habits and temper of the beast he had lost at some length, and convinced its new owners that he alone could bridle it without danger. This they promptly requested him to do, and when he had complied with their request, he seized the reins, leaped astride, spurred his mount at them, and disappeared down the road with the speed of an arrow.

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There is another legend which enjoyed great popularity in those times, in which two gamesters are the leading characters.

"I knew two fiddlers who were the most inveterate gamblers I have ever seen. The first never got his clutches on a coin without risking it over the table, while the second had been brought to such a pass that I believe he sometimes went without bread for a week. In a word, had they met in mid-winter, no matter how cold, they would have started a game in the middle of the road, so infected were they both with the virus. When traveling, their sterns and their elbows relieved the dreary and greasy monotony of their tatters.

"See," they would say, "how well two good hirelings for the service of your prince are faring."

Gambling and drinking, with, perhaps, a little discriminating wenching, have ever been held amongst the most attractive pleasures of the ingle-nook, nor has the ferocious fanaticism of paternalistic reform been able to change appreciably these primal instincts, even in countries which know well the blessings of intolerant legislation designed to force the worthy and the strong to conform to the standards set for the unworthy and the weak.

Wandalbert, the poet, recommends this charming and classical means of entertainment to pass the time in the dreary season of November. A game, perhaps for modest stakes, new wine and pure, and after that a comfortable nap before the fire. Barbarian as he was, employments such as these were neither improper nor out of order. What

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pictures of gorgeous pageantry he must have conjured from the living coals. Who knows but that some salamander, some elfin spirit of the fire, took form before his eyes, and personified the mist through which he looked on life, as did every other mediaeval mentality, until the dawn of the age which still could see the vanishing light of that flaming meteor we know as Villon. Let Wandalbert speak for himself and of himself:

“After the game and the wine,
In the dusk where the fire-light gleams,
I stretch me at ease in the ingle-nook,
And glide to the land of dreams.”

Pleasures such as these could have been enjoyed at home, but the company would not have been as varied, and the bard goes to the tavern. Another vivid pastel of the times is preserved in the National Library. It is a vagabond's credo, and it bears the marks of a sincerity as humble as it is intense. It is his confession of faith, and the games in the tavern are placed amongst the beatitudes. This lowly and rascally epicurian writes hauntingly of his ideals; he drinks his fill of the fine wines of Orleans, La Rochelle or Auxerre; he warms his chilled fingers while turning the spit to roast a fowl on which he sprinkles wine; he stretches his wearied body on the fresh straw strewed upon the floor or takes his ease on one of the long wooden benches to digest his meal, and perhaps to wonder when the taverner will draw the fatal mark under his score.

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THE VAGABOND'S CREDO.

All my joy is here on earth;
The tavern, with its cosy hearth
A better heaven far for me
Than any I must die to see.
I much prefer this happy state
To that beyond the Pearly Gate;
Sour wine I use to baste my roast,
A spear my turn-spit; and I toast
My lot in wine that knew some hill
Near Aucoirre, Orleans, or Rochelle.
A pleasure that has not a peer,
To drink, to eat, to have good cheer;
To sleep, to rest, to take my ease,
To spend enough, my friends to please,
That they may all look up to me.
To call the taverner when I
Would order wine or pay my score,
To gamble and be good for more,
A credit equal to my need,
And dice it merrily . . . my creed.

It is not difficult to infer, from the last verses of this credo, that dicing was very close to the hearts of those vagrant hordes that haunted the mediaeval taverns. Year in and year out, royal ordinances were promulgated to control the gaming; Poggio mentions the case of a dicer whom he himself knew well, and who was caught in the act and thrown into the jail. In 1350 a gambling law was passed which, among other clauses, contained the following:

“No tavern keeper shall receive or lodge any dicers or other persons of vicious callings.”

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But ingenuity has always a thousand expedients to use in getting around a law. As gambling for money was prohibited, they played for cakes, cracknels, and the like, and these were, of course, but the symbols which stood for a settlement to come—"dicing commodities," as they were called, which petty hawkers sold in the taverns. These hucksters of feudal times were blood brothers to the peddlers who cried their wares in the theatres in Greece and in the market for stolen goods at Rome. Their industry was rapidly extended throughout the papal states and became one of the most powerful factors in political espionage, pimping, and smuggling.

In an allegorical farce of the times, the personification of Virtue is introduced in the character of a seller of sweetmeats, while Temporal Power is represented as an ecclesiastic given to gambling. The scene is laid in a tavern, and the farce illustrates excellently the workings of the system. Virtue enters, carrying on her head a little wicker tray of wafers:

Virtue.—Cookies! Cookies! Cookies!

Temporal Power.—Turn out the contents of your tray and let us see the dice beneath.

Oftentimes the gamblers challenged the peddlers to a game and won the stock. When this occurred, the latter relinquished title to the tray, which the former, as evidence of his victory, fastened to the door of the tavern. In those days, even as in our own, the merchants of pleasure, like the sellers of cakes, plied their calling in the streets and especially in the taverns. Their very presence in such places,



A Mediaeval Inn

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at late hours, proved the cynical indifference with which the law, above quoted, was regarded. Another clause in this interesting law provided "that no tavern keeper shall receive drinkers after curfew shall have struck from Notre Dame."

This regulation has an exact parallel in the Statutes of London, A. D. 1285, and we find Edward I. forbidding tavern keepers to run open after curfew because "Such offenders as aforesaid, going about by night, do commonly resort and have their meetings and hold their evil talk in taverns more than elsewhere, and there do seek for shelter, lying in wait and watching their time to do mischief."

Laws hostile to the convenience of the turbulent have ever been mocked and travestied, and nowhere more so than in the inns and taverns. Passage after passage from the old romances and chroniclers, from the mediaeval writers of England and the Continent could be cited in proof, and were the curious lexicographer to compile a vocabulary of tavern oaths it would be a distinct contribution to the language. The pothouses were also the headquarters of such as dissented from the religion of the times, a very dangerous proceeding, as a dissenter was almost invariably held guilty of blasphemy, and if apprehended was burned at the stake or beaten to death. One old writer says:

"Many there be in these sad times of ours
Who have no faith in heaven, or its powers;
They laugh to scorn the truths of priestly lore.
And spend their lives within the tavern's door."

In another romance, the *Prise d'Alexander*, by

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Guillaume de Machaut, the following passage is found:

“ . . . And the tavern,
That veritable chapel of the devil,
Where one can purchase subtleties of evil;
No fairy legend this, in which to revel,
No squeamish principles at which to cavil;
Should you desire to laugh or swear,
Become a polished perjurer,
A wassailing rake or usurer,
Go any time, your types are there.”

However, much we may deplore the very existence of such places, we must never forget that the speech of the people, heard there in its greatest crudity but also in its purest virility, has always been the predominating factor in the growth of languages and in their literature. Scaliger has spoken of the disgust with which Catherine de Medici was smitten whenever she heard the argot of the Parisians, a strange squeamishness, indeed, in one who was a prime mover in the affair of St. Bartholomew's Eve, but we shall give our preference to robust old Montaigne. He preferred the *sermo plebeius* to all other French, and jolly Rabelais, a critic of the first order, fashioned the lovely prose of France from the classical models, but seasoned it with a leaven of gutter slang, and made the tongue one of the most fashing and vivid languages ever spoken or written.

“Is there not more meat,” demands Montaigne,*
“to be got from the clacking gossip of the herring

* Essays, Book III, Chap. 8.

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woman than from the public disputations of the men of this profession? I had rather my son learned his speech in the taverns than in those schools of windy oratory."

We have already remarked that the taverns were always seething hotbeds of discontent, whether in war or peace, and radicals and enemies of the public weal or the church were to be found there, if at all. The keepers of the inns were no strangers to the piratical exactions of the customs authorities, and they evaded all possible taxes with as little scruple, whether just or unjust. Their entire history is but a vivid chronicle of crime and devious diplomacy. There was a law against giving any vintage a name other than that of the province or district of origin, and one may easily imagine the delight of the good boniface with a regulation so prejudicial to his interests. For example, the vintages of Beaulne and Baigneux were very similar, but the first was much finer than the second, and much more expensive.

A little practice in synthetic chemistry would enable the discriminating vintner to remedy the defects of the inferior plant and palm it off on all but experts. Sometimes his progressiveness got him into difficulties, but as a general thing he got away with it, as we can see from a delightful old skit called

CARTIER de MOUTON.

Let us pray that our hosts at the taverns,
Whose practical alchemy governs
That resinous taste
Of the wine that we waste,
May be drowned in the brew in their caverns.

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Another provision of the law relating to taverns prescribed the tariff to be collected and also the prices which should be charged by the host. There is little need to remark that this article was infringed more than all the rest together, as it was nothing short of a challenge both to self-interest and to the law of supply and demand.

"The vintners," we quote law, "are prohibited from retailing the better wines of the realm, such as those of St. Porcain, Beaulne, or Saint Jean, at more than ten deniers the pint,* for the better white wines not more than six deniers parisian, and for the others in proportion."

The wines spoken of are, as a matter of course, those which are mentioned in the legends of the times, as well as in the "Battle of the Wines," in which a very complete list will be found. Another such list will be found in Jean Bruyant's "Road to Poverty and Riches," which we cite, as it is less familiar to the reading public:

"Bread for the mouth, and a foreign wine
From Burgundy, Gascony, Angevin,
Beaulne, Rochelle or Saint Porcain,
For the stomach's sake and the body's gain."

The vintages of Aunis, Anjou and Poitu have also a great reputation to sustain, as is seen from the "Romance of Renard":

And you should drink good wine of Anjou,
Of La Rochelle and of Poitu.

Many passages in the chronicles and tales vaunt the esteem in which the fine wines of Orleans were

* The old French pint was equal to our own.

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held, but the weary traveler should beware the vintages of Maine, and avoid them as he would the plague. Basselin curses them heartily in much the same way that Horace did the bread, on his journey to Brindisium:

Drink not a drop of Colinou
Or Death will quickly call for you;
That of Laval will break your cincture;
Vintages of evil omen,
They are enemies of nature.

The capital wines of the Midi are frequently mentioned, as well as certain caudals and mixed drinks, such as hypocras, of which they were the base. The story of aphrodisiac preparations and beverages will probably never be written with anything like completeness, as many of the formulae are unintelligible today. Eustace Deschamps, in a poem dealing with moral precepts and rules for health in body and mind, counsels drinkers as follows:

"If you must drink, guard well against hypocras, clear and madder-red; wine that is heavy and ruddy gives off fumes and generates an ardent heat; it lies heavily in the bladder, and gives rise to the malady of stone or gravel in the kidneys."

We have enumerated the wines most in demand in those days. The vintner could charge a legalized price for his merchandise, a price known equally well to his clients; hence his ambitions must restrain themselves unless his skill in adulteration were fine enough to emancipate him from a situation galling in the extreme. He bawled his wares from his own

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threshold, for every passing stranger to hear, but his chief reliance was, of course, upon the neighboring tradesmen. Should he attempt any trickery with them, and substitute adulterated tinctures for honest merchandise, they would even the score with him if they caught him, and their counter maneuvers, as set forth in some of the contemporary farces, are no less diverting than adequate. There is one exquisite little satire with three characters—a copper-smith, a cobbler, and a taverner—which is admirably to our purpose. It may be given in synopsis as follows:

The coppersmith and the cobbler had quarreled and had finally come to blows over some trifle. Having arrived at a temporary compromise, they went to the tavern to have a drink together. After having toasted one another, they discovered that neither had any money, and a parley with the taverner ensued. They promised payment on the morrow, but when the boniface called for his money the copper-smith had disguised himself as the cobbler's woman and the cobbler, feigning a furious rage, distributed kicks and blows of his fist to right and left, and the taverner, black and blue, was put to rout.

Taverner.

'Fore God! Restrain your husband's wrath,
This furied insane aftermath,
Lest death should pay the wages due
Before I can escape from you.
I've lent my gold to an outlaw
Whom now I know's not worth a straw;
Duped and beaten, I've this to say:
Good-bye, my friends, I'm on my way.

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There was another class of society, however, better qualified to cope with the subtle complexes of even the wildest boniface. I refer to the vast number of students in the universities which were then coming into their own. Their number was legion and the majority belonged to one or another of the secret societies which marked the first beginnings of organized crime on a grand scale. Montaigne alludes to the "galoches" and "compains," the "capetes," "coquillards" and "goliars," to give them their various special names. Never in all tavern history were there more assiduous and appreciative frequenters; their specialty was in drinking heavily and eating to repletion at the smallest possible cost to themselves, or better still, at no expense whatever. They were inveterate gamblers, playing tremerelle or nerelle until they had lost everything to their very shoestrings, as Rabelais has it, when they would haunt the bowling greens which were part of the equipment of the more pretentious taverns.

The "Lamprey," a famous old establishment spoken of by Rabelais, had its bowling green, a place which was for many years a very shrine for all true devotees of pantagruelism, and as the years passed, almost every tavern in the city of Paris, no matter how unpretentious, managed to have a green of some sort, well sanded and cared for, where poet and peasant, rascal and roisterer could foregather and pass the time, profitably to the host, and pleasantly to themselves. Old and young frequented these plots, and at one time, it was almost as though the age of the patriarchs had returned. In the times with which we are dealing, however, these places were far less

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innocent because of the malignant propensities of the classes whose leisure was spent there. If they were not students, jugglers, or minstrels, they would be priests whose lineal forebears were nameless, and the fable of Saint Peter and the juggler is true to life as it then was:

In the tavern, cunning beguiles,
And of the tavern, a woman's smiles;
A subtle reciprocity,
A marvel of precocity,
Dice and the tavern go hand in hand
You lose if you win and you always spend;
Thither you go to bowl or to bob,
In the tavern and into the mob.

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CHAPTER VII.

Before quitting the subject of mediaeval scholasticism, we will comment briefly upon the secret societies to which the students belonged, in as much as out of them have come, perhaps indirectly, the fraternities of our own days. The various groups named by Montaigne have already been mentioned, the "coquillards," who wore the scallop shell, the "goliards," to which the varlets belonged, and others. But of all these secret societies, the coquillards were the greatest, and co-ordinated, in a measure, the activities of the others.

This organization, exceedingly powerful in thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, was probably the inner sanctum of directed crime; its activities were limited only by the bounds of human ingenuity, and it was charged with responsibility for many of the murders, thefts, and counterfeiting operations, which defied solution. Membership included all classes and all nationalities, no less infinite in their operations than in their genius. The native of France had long known but too well the dagger and the head axe; it remained for the levantine to instruct his western co-worker in the merits of the strangler's cord and the boring wood ant, or the power for silence that lay hidden in a pair of poisoned gloves or between the gummed leaves of a manuscript.

When the coquillards gambled, it was generally with cogged dice, if they counterfeited, the product

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of their industry circulated long before falling under suspicion: as forgers of dispensations they had few equals, and we shall furnish at least one instance of their technique. They drank heavily and wenched heartily, and many of the influential names of the times figured in their transactions. In addition to the students and their varlets, priests, vintners, soldiers, and the scum of the nobility lent their brains and services to further the designs of the society.

The malignant Montigny, companion of Villon, whom Robert Louis Stevenson has introduced into his greatest short story, "A Lodging For The Night," was a wearer of the scallop shell. A man is known by the company he keeps, and as Francois de Montcorbier, known as Villon, was an intimate of Montigny, Tabary, Cayeux, and others known to have belonged, it is assumed that he also was a member of the society.

A thieves' jargon was current among them, as several ballads testify, and the poet could scarcely have known the idiom unless he had been initiated: that he did know the patois is proved by his own admission, hence he must have been entitled to wear the scallop shell. And notwithstanding certain powerful friends who intervened in his behalf, pointed out to Louis XI the outstanding brilliance of the poet, and causing that subtle tyrant to remark "that he could not afford to hang Villon, as the kingdom could boast of a hundred thousand rascals of equal eminence but not one other poet so accomplished in sweet speech and ingenious insight," notwithstanding all this, I maintain that it is difficult indeed to explain his escapes from the gibbet, in times

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as harsh as those in which he lived, when life counted as nothing, and robbers and utterers of false money were either roasted or hanged and strangled, unless the powerful secret influence of some huge organization such as the coquillards, procured the release of a useful tool by methods of bribery and indirection.

Francois Villon took his degree of Licentiate of Arts from the University of Paris in 1452, one year before the fall of Constantinople. During the term of his residence at the school it is safe to assume that he was, if anything, a leader. Brilliant, turbulent, a wastrel and a ne'er-do-well, excellent company, could his comrades but stomach the supreme ability in another to make them conscious of their own shortcomings; he lived with his adopted father in the Hotel de la Porte Rouge, and must have occupied a position of some little affluence, amongst the motley rout of scholars.

“My time of youth I do bewail,
That more than most lived merrily,”

he writes, in retrospection, and tells us also that he was never an attentive pupil:

“If in my time of youth, alack!
I had but studied and been sage
Nor wandered from the beaten track
I had slept warm in my old age.
But what did I? As bird from cage
I fled the schools: and now with pain,
My heart is like to cleave in twain.”

His experiences with relatives were merely conventional, and he must often have had cause to lament the feebleness of credit:

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“Whilst those by kindred to me knit,
The due of Nature all forgot,
To disavow me have seen fit,
For lack of pelf to pay my scot,”

but, as the Repues Franches show, he also had the resource to defeat even the self-interest of miserly butchers and bakers. For the benefit of my readers, who have not the leisure to peruse the original, I offer a prose paraphrase of several episodes from these “Free Feeds.” It should be understood that they are not of Villon’s composition, though they must have been written, at the latest, a few years after his death, and he must have loomed large in the sight of his contemporaries, otherwise Legend would never have made him her own. Master Francois and several cronies are faced with a condition and not a theory. The spirit of festive revelry is strong upon them, but they have not the wherewithal, and they look to him for a solution of their dilemma. The sequel will show whether their confidence was misplaced.

The Feast of Villon and His Friends

“How can he feast, who has neither gold nor silver, nor the wherewithal to pawn? By virtue of this very condition, he must only live the more sumptuously: this is the accustomed way. What scheme can we devise to cozen fools and dine in comfort? He who can accomplish this will make a splendid leader.”

To this purpose spoke the boon companion of Master Francois Villon; and they, between them all, not worth two onions, tents, rugs, nor yet a pavillion.

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"Be not concerned," he admonished them, "for there will be bread today, make no doubt of it, and wine, and viands, in fine style, and a good hot roast into the bargain."

A Method by Which to Secure Fish.

Thereupon, he asked them what viands they would relish most to set their teeth in.

One expressed a preference for a fine fish; another asked for meat. Master Francois Villon, fine archer that he was, made answer:

"Don't worry, you must not despair of having anything, for there will be plenty of everything."

Then, taking leave of his friends, he betook himself to the fish market, leaving them unconvinced, and filled with apprehensions, on either side of the bridge. At an expensive shop he selected a basketful of fish, and upon my soul, he impressed them there with his position and affluence. By promising to hand the boy who carried the basket whatever was due him, he got away without paying. They took their departure then, and as they were passing by Notre Dame, Villon caught sight of the Father Confessor, who ministered both to men and women.

When he had come within a short distance of the priest he accosted his reverence, saying: "Pray, Sir, please minister to my nephew, for bad indeed is the state of perversity into which he has fallen. He is most negligent toward his God; he has come to such a state that he thinks of nothing but money."

"In truth," replied the confessor, "I will do this right gladly."

Master Francois took the basket. "Come here,

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my friend," said he, "there is the man who will settle with you, you rascal, when he has done," and went his way carrying the basket. When the confessor had finished confessing the poor varlet and had given him absolution, the latter ran after him at a good clip: "Sir," cried he, "I beg you to take a moment now to settle with me, and you will confer a great favor."

"Gladly, in truth," said the confessor, "benedicite, and then I shall confess you and give you absolution, and grant the penitence necessary in your case."

"What a confessor!" said the poor fellow, "was I not already absolved at Easter? But may it please the good Saint Peter at Rome, I ask you for fifty sous!"

"What have we here? What are you getting at?"

"My mistress is involved in a bad affair! Come hurry, and pay me for my basket of fish."

"Ha! my friend, is this a game?" demanded the priest sourly, "you must bethink yourself of God and beg his forgiveness with humility."

"The foul fiend on your lecture," howled the varlet, "settle with me without more words, as the gentleman told you to."

At last the confessor saw clearly that there had been a swindle of some sort, and when he heard the gentleman mentioned, he understood the whole device. But the varlet was far from taking the thing in a spirit of sportsmanship, as he had neither his money nor his fish.

But the ingenuity of Francois had discovered a manner of providing fish that he and his friends might gorge themselves and have good cheer. His

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inventiveness was a veritable provider for such as had no funds. His subtle resourcefulness could skillfully cozen a person as quickly to his face as behind his back.

A Method by Which to Provide Tripe.

After thinking a while he devised a little plan and ordered one of his friends to scrub his aftermath until it was bright and clean.

"I find it necessary to look around," said he, "and when I am in front of the tripe booth, you are to parade past showing your bare stern as though it were a prank, and afterwards we shall feast."

His friend did not fail him, as Saint Remy of Rheims hears me, and came as per agreement to the Petite Pont, with his hind quarters bare up to the ribs. When Master Francois saw this monstrosity coming, God knows the whimsical grimaces he made, for he held in his hands some liver, lights and tripe.

As though he were boiling over with scornful anger, he lifted his hand and struck the exhibitionist across the bottom with the tripe: then, without a word, he wanted to put it back on the counter. The tripe vendor flew into a rage and would not have it. Master Francois made not the slightest objection, but went away without paying her, and carried the tripe with him. Thus, you understand, they had tripe and fish, but to truly dine in style they must have fresh bread also.

A Method by Which to Procure Bread.

Apeing the strutting pomposity of a major domo or maitre d'hotel, the better to purvey the things his

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comrades needed, he betook himself to the baker's shop, into which he strode and demanded with all the hauteur in the world that they bake five or six dozen loaves of bread, and rush everything with all dispatch. When the greater part of it was done and placed in a basket, he requested them to send the balance after him as he did not care to wait its delivery. The varlet put the basket on his shoulder and carried it after Master Francois, and they arrived without mishap before the gate of a grand old house. The varlet unloaded his basket and ran back to fetch the remainder, but Master Francois did not await his return. He had, by his wit, sufficient bread to supply the needs for his banquet, and although the baker returned at once, he failed to find his maitre d'hotel, and he came to the conclusion that at this point they had gulled him.

A Method by Which to Procure Wine.

After Master Francois had furnished the larder he was reminded that, if they cherished any ambitions of getting drunk they must first have something to drink. He borrowed two huge wooden pitchers, exactly alike, remarking that he must beat about the bush for wine. One of his pitchers he filled with clear water and betook himself to the Pine Cone tavern, carrying his two pitchers. He asked whether they had any good wine, and ordered the pitcher filled with the very best, which should be white and loving, so they filled his pitcher with their finest, a very good wine of Baigneux.

Master Francois took the two vessels and placed them side by side very carefully, and without haste;

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and, to make sure of his purchase, he asked the varlet what wine this was. The latter answered that it was white wine of Baigneux.

"Take it back, for I want none of that, upon my faith! What is this? Are you a ninny? Empty my pitcher at once. Wine of Beaulne is what I asked for, and that is good, not for any substitute."

While he was speaking, he dextrously exchanged the pitcher of wine for the one full of water, which was then poured into the tun.

Thus did the fine art of trickery settle their score for wine and without consulting a conjurer, they were enabled to dine, fair weather or foul. The best part of the business, however, was the supper. "I will see that we dine on roast tonight," Master Francois told them.

A Method by Which to Procure Roast.

It was agreed that he should go to a delicatessen and shop for meat. His waggish knavery suggested the character of a parvenu, and, to add a tang of pepper to the farce, a contractor was to happen in and slap the poet's face.

He entered the shop and was looking at the meats when the other arrived and, with a scowl on his face, demanded to know "what this _____ wants?" and slapped him resoundingly, abusing him the while, and Master Francois, submitting to the insults, was busy stuffing his pockets with the roast.

The contractor who had given the blow then took to his heels as fast as he could go, and Master Francois, without saying a word, clutched his roast and ran in pursuit of his assailant. Thus it fell out

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that, without further exertion, they could feast with devout hearts on bread, wine, meats, fish, and roast, with which his wit and resourcefulness had provided them."

Rogues, with little save their ability to redeem them, ladies of broad vision and the easiest manner, taverns, stews, the prison house; all are part and parcel of his life, yet to him they mattered nothing. Even to himself he was an enigma as unanswerable as the riddle of the sphynx:

"Flies in the milk I know full well;
I know men by the clothes they wear;
I know the walnut by the shell:
I know the foul sky from the fair:
I know the pear tree by the pear:
I know the worker by the drone
And eke the good wheat from the tare:
I know all save myself alone."

He must have been in his early twenties when he contracted those blasting friendships and associations which were to blight his career and bring him at least twice within an ace of dangling "in the ghost's moonshine," from the grim gibbet of Mont-faucon. In a marvellous ballad, written in the interval between his sentence and his reprieve, he draws a terrible picture of the lifeless carcasses swinging to and fro, their eyes picked out by carrion crows, their faces pitted by the beaks of predatory birds, that perch upon their victims' heads or shoulders. So vivid is the writing that the reader, if the night be eerie, can almost hear the chuckling rattle of dry

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bones in the wind; bones of criminals "done," so says the poet, "to their death by justice."

He warns his comrades against post mortem sunburn:

"Beware of that ill sun (look ye)
That tans a man when he is dead."

Prostitutes and barmaids in endless procession appear upon his stage to be blazoned down the ages, and of these, perhaps the little Macee of Orleans, who gave him his first lessons in sex (*avoit ma ceinture*), and La Grosse Margot, in whose tavern-stew he lived in obscurity for a time, injured him far worse than he knew. In that unspeakable ballad "Of Villon and Gros Margot," he describes the revolting condition to which he brought himself. "Here in this bordel where we ply our trade," is the haunting and sardonic refrain, and though the poem reeks of corruption, it is the very stuff of the tavern life of the times, and the bitterness of self-revelation in utter defeat is described here as nowhere else. It makes what otherwise would have been beyond the pale, a masterpiece.

"Here I am. See what I have brought myself to. When custom comes I run to the tavern for wine. If they pay well I thank them, and bid them return when their appetites prompt. I empty bidets, but after all, rain or shine, I get my bed and board, and more."

Aside from his old mother, of whose unfaltering devotion he speaks in the most affecting terms, the woman whose influence was paramount in his life seems to have been Catherine de Vaucelles. She was a young woman of good family, whose love of

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herself was the grand passion of her life. She was probably of that physically beautiful but cold blooded type which, immune to the promptings of any feelings or passions other than those of self interest or revenge, can yet, in some mysterious way, inspire passion in others, lead them along, and finally ruin them. The sea of literature abounds with wrecks shattered on the reefs of sex, and this lady was unquestionably an arrant flirt who played her "hole-card" for all it was worth, and probably more. If the Ballad of Ladies Love is genuine and addressed to her, one might almost believe the author a contemporary, so pregnant is his prophecy:

"Well enough favored and with substance still
Some little stored, chance brought me 'neath love's
spell

And night and day, until I had my will,
I pined in languor unendurable;
I loved a damsel more than I can tell;
But, with good luck, and rose-nobles a score,
I had what men have had of maids before.
Then, in myself considering, I did say:
'Love sets by pleasant speech but little store;
The wealthy gallant always gains the day.'

So chanced it that, whilst coin my purse did fill,
The world went merry as a marriage bell
And I was all in all with her until,
Without word said, my wanton's loose eyes fell
Upon a greybeard, rich but foul as hell:
A man more hideous never woman bore.
But what of that? He had his will and more:
And I, confounded, stricken with dismay,

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Upon this text went glosing passing sore:
The wealthy gallant always gains the day."

"Lack-gold undid thee," she tells him and, in return, she and all her kind are crowned with immortality, but alas, an immortality like that conferred upon Tithonus, she is destined to linger and pine, until disease or suicide shall prevent the consequences of a destitute old age which has absolutely nothing merchantable left.

It is possible that his reaction to the treatment meted out to him by Catherine de Vaucelles and her lover contributed in some degree to the abandon with which he threw himself into the life of the Parisian underworld. Wild orgies in the ruins without the city walls; orgies at which the women of the town, who throng his pages, must have been present, cotty-tic drinking bouts in the taverns of ill fame and in the students' quarters, terrible dissipation, hunger, and disease, all wrought havoc with a constitution probably never robust, and a term of close confinement in a dank dungeon was all that was needed to complete his physical ruin. He has described his symptoms admirably and we know the malady from which he suffered:

"I feel the droughts of death draw night,
Gobbets of phlegm as white as snow
And big as tennis balls, spit I;
By token Jehanneton no mo'
Doth me for squire and servant owe,
But for a worn out rook. Ah well!
I have the voice and air, I know;
Yet am I but a cockerel."

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Despite all his misery, and degradation, and uneasiness of soul, he never lost his pathetically impish sense of humor; and when in hiding, he acknowledges having robbed the proprietor of the Pine Cone of fourteen casks of wine of Aulnis, at some little peril to himself, he promises the boniface payment in full, though he silyly intimates that there may be some difficulty in presenting the bill:

“Item, if Turgis come to me,
I’ll pay him fairly for his wine:
But soft: if where I lodge find he,
He’ll have more wit than any nine.

Thus we see him at thirty years of age: with merciless realism he draws his portrait, and more. “In years a cockerel,” in appearance a rook; hair and even eyebrows gone, body emaciated, “the worms will have no great purchase thereof, hunger has waged too stern a war on it,” a weak heart, and oedema of the lungs. His helplessness has opened his eyes to things to which hitherto they had been blind. He renounces his former manner of life,, “puts his lute beneath the seat:” his sporting days are over.

If we are to take him literally, he was bedridden when he dictated much of the Greater Testament to a clerk, but when he vanished from his former haunts, it was never to return, and we know nothing of his death, whether of time or place, although it is fairly certain that pulmonary hemorrhage must have been the cause.

His writings glow and gleam with a gorgeous coloring that waxes and wanes with the moods of the reader; a color which, to me, is reminiscent of a

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Chopin nocturne or an impromptu, filled with the tenderest and sweetest laughter, and the bitterest tears; yet his prevailing mood seems to be that of some impish madcap who can, when he desires, imbue his poems with the laughter of the hunchbacked Malatesta or the sublime pathos of Thucydides.

With all his carelessness, he has a *curiosa felicitas* Horatiana; a verve and vividness that swell to an anthem or revel in invective the gall of which would embitter even that terrible composition of Ovidius. The ballad to his mother stands alone for lofty purity, while the ballad of Slandorous Tongues is probably the most horrible and hate driven invective in any language. One of his finest gems is the Ballad of Good Doctrine to Those of Evil Life. Characterised by absolute sincerity, he addresses his former friends whose ways lie along the treacherous paths that lead to the gibbet. He who knew all save himself alone, he whose life was that of a Prodigal Son, but one with too much courage to come groveling to the paternal door and give smug mediocrity its chance to sneer, and shine by the light of its own sickly reflection, he it is that drops his mocking mood and talks straight from the shoulder: a man of sense and sympathies, but one with no illusions:

Ballad of Good Doctrine to Those of Ill Life.

“Peddle indulgencies as you may:
Cog the dice for your cheating throws:
Try if counterfeit coin will pay,
At risk of roasting at last, like those
That deal in treason. Lie and glose,
Rob and ravish: what profits it?”

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Who gets the purchase, do you suppose?
Taverns and wenches, every whit.

Rhyme, rail, wrestle and cymbals play:
Flute and fool it in mummers' shows:
Along with the strolling players stray
From town to city, without repose;
Act mysteries, farces, imbroglios:
Win money at gleek or a lucky hit
At the pins: like water, away it flows;
Taverns and wenches, every whit.

Turn from your evil courses I pray,
That smell so foul in a decent nose;
Earn your bread in some honest way.
If you have no letters, nor verse nor prose
Plough or groom horses, beat hemp or toze.
Enough shall you have if you think but fit:
But cast not your wage to each wind that blows;
Taverns and wenches, every whit.

Envoi

Doublets, pourpoints and silken hose,
Gowns and linen, woven or knit,
Ere your wede's worn away it goes,
Taverns and wenches, every whit."

He wrote his Lesser Testament in the dead of winter. The snow crunches under the feet of the watch, and the wolves, "fed by the wind," fill the dim night with their eldritch howls. He is alone; he abandons himself to reverie and falls asleep. When he comes to himself again the inkpot is frozen, the candle has guttered out, and he is forced to go to bed

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to keep warm. Ages have passed, and the realm of France and those who wished her ill have undergone terrible trials: her sons and daughters have met "the beasts that vomit flame," and have overcome them, but the light of that candle which he thought was out will shine forever to enhance the fame of the most whimsically human genius of them all. Sham and false seeming were to him as transparent as glass, and his life was the finest answer to the question asked by his great countryman:

"Who has not had his promised land, his day of ecstasy, and his end in exile?"

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CHAPTER VIII.

In this brief and inadequate sketch of Villon, we have traced the tavern life of the times. The students, however bellicose and overbearing, were not the worst of the breed that haunted the taverns and rendered them unsafe for peaceful citizens. As early as the times of Gregory of Tours, bands of assassins intruded themselves upon our notice; bands whose perfect understanding with the taverner meant shelter from storms and sanctuary in times of trouble. Centuries passed, but conditions remained the same, and fortunate indeed is the harmless traveller who can remain for any length of time at an inn or tavern without encountering trouble or actual peril.

A very amusing fable, entitled the "Sacristan of Cluny," by Jean le Chapelain, tells of the amusing dilemma which imposed a delicate problem of conduct upon two of these knights of the road.

It seems that they had stolen a hog from a tenant farmer named Thibault. He was fattening the animal for the Christmas festival, and the abduction took place just before butchering time. They put the carcass in a sack, and buried it in a pile of manure, after which they hastened to the tavern to make the arrangements necessary for the fullest enjoyment of their fat prize.

In the meantime, a certain Hue had beaten the sacristan of the convent to death, with a club, because of the latter's clubbiness with the lovely Idoline, the former's mistress.

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Unconsciously imitating the excellent example set by the thieves, the murderer placed the corpse in a sack and buried it in the same pile of fertilizer.

Our miscreants sallied out of their retreat at the hour of dusk, retrieved what was buried, and hastened back to the tavern with their sack of booty. To while away the time until their feast, they entered upon a protracted drinking bout, intending to consume the pork in a pleasing interlude, and at the same time, to whet their thirst.

When the time came, one drew his knife, while the other opened the sack and commenced tugging at the hog, but the body of the monk was the reward of their labors. They had gotten the wrong sack.

We need not dwell upon the abject pessimism with which they viewed their find, as the purpose for which the anecdote was cited was to show the close relations which subsisted between the criminal classes and the tavern keepers. The sympathy between the realm of outlawry and the bonifaces was open and often brazen; the latter were plunderers of travellers, and few there were that escaped his clutches without being victimized in some way. If the wayfarer escaped also the attentions of these assassins, he must have been a son of a seventh son, and Sir Walter Scott, in recording the nocturnal adventures of Gurth, serving the son of Cedric as Squire, wrote of an occurrence which must have been very common, save for the bout at quarterstaves, and its happy issue.

Bands of assassins*, (the term ruffian did not come into use until after the siege of Naples), made

* The levantine fanatics, crazed with hashish, deemed it their duty to die killing Christians. From them the term assassin is derived.

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the taverns their bases of operations, and the number of disappearances and violent deaths in public places of loose resort finally attracted the notice of the lawmakers. In the fourteenth century we find an ordinance in which taverners are prohibited from retaining the effects of any individual dying in their establishments.

"Any boniface retaining the effects of any stranger dying in his establishment shall he held accountable for triple the value of the properties so retained."

Strange tenderness of character! The officials seem to have been less exercised over the death of the stranger than the misappropriation of his property! for the law provides for no investigation of the death itself.

I would not have my readers suppose that only the inns and taverns along the roads were dangerous, for this was far from being the case, and those in the great cities were often more perilous than the others, those at Paris and other capitals and seaports being the worst of all in that respect. Slowness of communication, lack of co-operation by the various pre-vosts, and little or no information as to the identities of those who led the criminal guilds, gave the outlaws a great advantage. It was in a tavern that Jeanne Divion, one of the most celebrated forgers of the past, carried out her program, and brought about a scandal which almost invalidated property titles in the realm, and which far surpassed the affair of Madame Humbert or Cassie Chadwick.

The inn at which she lodged was the Eagle's Nest, and it was one of the best known in the city,

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being situated in the Rue Saint Antoine, not far from the Place Baudoyer. At that time the members of the fullers' guild used the place as headquarters when out of work. According to the best information available to the police, this inn belonged to the abbey of Saint Maudres-Fosses. Here Divion opened her school of forgery, duplicating the royal seals for the purpose of altering the documents relating to the titles of great estates. When the matter was finally thrashed out it resulted in a famous trial which smirched the reign of Phillip de Valois with the odious breath of scandal, and involved the vital interests of nobility and corporation alike.

Allied industries, such as counterfeiting, had also their headquarters in the inns. This statement will stand in need of elucidation, and the facts are as follows:

Until a recent period, the vineyards surrounding the city of Paris grew almost up to the walls, yielding slowly before the suburbs as they came into being, one after another. Many of the employees in the mint were producers of wine, being protected in their calling by an ordinance which exempted them from the duty of one eighth, which was levied upon the great nobles who sold the product of their lands at retail. The mint workers at Orleans had also identical privileges, and a suburb of that city may still bear the name Hameau de la Monnaie, from the employees of the mint who resided there. They produced wine and they sold it; soon, also, becoming all too familiar with other variants such as adulteration and dilution, thus laying an admirable foundation for

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counterfeiting later on, and this is exactly what did come to pass.

Some of the most persistent counterfeiting with which the government had to deal was carried on within the official circle. The abuse became so threatening that in 1360 an ordinance was passed requiring every keeper of a tavern to take his oath that he faithfully observed all laws dealing with the medium of exchange. But what was an oath or two between friends such as these? In the reign of Charles VII, a silversmith named Jacques Coeur filed an information with the authorities, describing the doings of a band of coiners whose activities centered around an inn in the abbotal village of Saint Benoit sur Loire. The sign of this tavern was a savage, and the place was known locally as the "Homme Sauvage." The records show that there actually was such a tavern in that district, and this lends color to the story. The information was given to a certain Barbansoin, captain of the city, and version of the substance of his report follows:

"Yesterday after vespers, a certain Jacques Coeur came in. He was unknown to me, and said that he wished to speak of certain matters, under a promise of absolute secrecy. He said that the receiver of taxes at Saint Benoit was affiliated with certain silver platers, by whose means he manufactured crowns of imitation silver, which he used to pay the police. The ingots resembled gold, but in reality they were brass which had been washed in gold. He also said that this receiver of taxes had an appointment for that very night, to meet his confederates at



Health-Drinking
(From Alfrics Version of Genesis)

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the hostelry where hangs the sign of the *Homme Sauvage*."

Let us contrast the above passage with one from Renart, where the old author has not omitted to mention the coiners, in his catalogue of those of evil professions who frequented the taverns:

"It is an inn for the glutton, it overflows with ribaldry of every sort; a sanctuary for robbers and brawling rowdies, blackguards, and utterers of false coin. Every evil of deceit and trickery is well known in the taverns; shrines of false pretense and bragging are they, and they endure over long."

In times of war these establishments were eternally under suspicion because of their usefulness to spies and traitors; a little detail which is mentioned in Renart:

"It is the hostel of the traitor as well as that of malefactors, and of every kind and calling living evilly by wrongful means."

Many an officer has paid with his life because his tongue wagged too freely at the tavern, and the age had long passed when it was possible to respect the stern Roman axiom enunciated by Martial:

"Damn the drinker whose memory lasts until the morrow."

In the year 1356 the authorities of Nîmes made fast the Arenian Gate because of an inn which was close at hand, and which, had the gate remained in use, might have been used as headquarters by the enemies of the king. By this action they prevented a repetition of the manner of entry into Troy, and minimized the danger of having their walls scaled by the aid of traitors within.

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Radicals, propagators of heresy, free thinkers, and the like also lodged at the inns, and lectured to their converts there; a thing so perilous in those times that only the hardiest had the courage to do it.

Du Cange, in his glossary, speaks, in his article on "Albergum," of a certain Grillonus who, in 1258, preached in all the taverns, a thing no one had ventured to do before his time. Birthplaces of all that was evil, and of some things that are immoral, foci for assassin and thief, schools in which much of the great mass of Goliardic poetry had its inspiration, and in which the archpoet of the order, whoever he may have been gained his inspiration for one of the greatest drinking songs of all times, these inns and taverns of the period were ever the targets of restrictive legislation. We have given several examples above, and others more drastic are to follow.

In December 1254, during the reign of Louis IX, an ordinance for the reform of the manners and customs of Languedoc and Languedoil was passed. Article 29 prohibits bonifaces from lodging any individual unless that person shall be a traveller passing through the provinces.

"No innkeeper shall lodge any individual except a transient, or someone having no establishment in the town."

The purpose of this edict was, of course, to restrain the criminal proclivities of the tavern-haunting criminal classes and render them less dangerous to law abiding citizens, but conditions could scarcely have improved appreciably, as there was still another ordinance "For the Utility of the Realm," dating back to the same reign, and dealing with the same idea.

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This ukase was still in force in 1405, as in that year a boniface named Adam Corbel refused shelter to a few gentry whose faces he did not know and did not like. There is no mention of a hotel register until the year 1407, but on November 29 of that year a regulation was prescribed which compelled keepers of inns and hotels to provide a register in which they inscribed the name and quality of the guest lodging with them. This was a prudent measure, and it did more to remedy the defects of the situation than all preceding legislation. It is still in force throughout the civilized world, and has been from that time. It is probably true that this custom was in force at Rome before its adoption by the realm of France, and, if Marco Polo is to be relied upon, in Cathay.

As strangers were then the only ones having the rights of fire and water, salt and shelter at the inns, these regulations were passed primarily in their interests, but the mania for travel, actuating, as it did, the great body of religious fanatics, wandering students, and the like, to make pilgrimages from the occident to the Holy Land, or to Rome, necessitated some form of shelter, whether furnished by the landlord, as was the case in countries under cultivation, or by the recluse or refectory, in the more desolate and barren reaches.

The wealthier countries had their inns, and some of them, such as those of Pavia, Pisa, Verona, Austria, and the like were justly famous for a variety of causes, as the Goliardic drinking songs of the twelfth century proves. In these softer climes, the monasteries were generally located at some distance from the great roads; they were difficult of access, and they

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generally extended hospitality to only the wealthy and powerful or to the very poor. To meet the needs of this situation, the anchorites, living in austere imitation of the older hermits of the Nitrian desert, erected their little huts at bridgeheads, or in the rocky and sterile districts which the weary palmer or fugitive knight errant often were forced to traverse. The mallet hung from a peg beside the door and the wayfarer, in need of food and shelter, knocked thunderously as his intended host was often feeble and deaf. These hermits performed a real service to humanity; they made no charge whatsoever, but the guest must have been mean indeed, when he left no little memento to supply what he had consumed and to show his appreciation of shelter when he had stood most in need of it and had thought least to find it.

But alas, the ancient abstemiousness of the sect which, in former times was well worthy of canonization, had deteriorated in the fourteenth century and in the eyes of the law, the majority of anchorites were but non-producing parasites, to be jailed and held for punishment like any beggar or highwayman. Langland's opinion of them is but too plainly stated in the vision of *Piers Plowman*, though he does not decry the genuine hermit, far from it:

Lewede eremytes,
That loken full lougheliche to lacchen mennes almesse,
In hope to sitten at even by the hote coles,
Unlouke hus legges abrod other lygges at hus ese,
Reste hym and roste hym and his ryg turne,
Drynke drue and deepe and drawe hyn thanne to
bedde;

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And when hym liketh and lust hus leve ys to aryse;
When he ys rysen, rometh out and ryght wel aspieth
Whar he may rathest have a repast other a rounde of
bacon,

Sulver other sode mete and some tyme bothe,
A loof other half a loof other a lompe of cheese;
And carieth it hom to hus cote and cast hym to lyve
In ydelnesse and in ese.*

Rutebeuf has also devoted a fine passage to the hermits of his times:

"Alas! The garb makes not the anchorite: though a man may dwell in a hermitage, and be clothed in a hermit's habiliments, I make not two straws or garb or vesture unless he lead a life as pure as his robes call for. But many there be that make a fine showing and marvellous semblance of worth; they are like those trees that fail of producing fruit, though they blossomed ever so showily."

Once in a blue moon, we find a kind and sympathetic soul lodged in a landlord, who, judged by appearances, would have been hanged out of hand. Such an experience fell to the lot of ten confidential agents of Bertran du Guesclin, who received help when they needed it most, so honored was the great knight, throughout the realm.

"All of the ten had entered the tavern: they called the host, who heard them well: 'Host, bring us wine, if you will.' 'With what will you pay' the host demanded. A squire spoke up: 'Of what are you afraid?' asked he, 'those here are knights and squires.' 'Knights,' said the host, who had been well

* Piers Plowman. . . . Skeat. . . . Text C. Passus X, 11, 140-152.

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trained, 'where then have you left your golden spurs? Would that I had your horses comfortable stabled, for I have a stable and fodder enough to feed ten horses for as many months.'

" 'A right good sort,' said a squire who was born at Nantes, 'fore God, let us not bedevil him. We have come from Bordeaux, and troubles enough we have had. Bertran du Guesclin, who led us has sent us forth to furnish out his commissary with one thousand doubloons of fine gold, for which we ransack the world to buy the things he needs.'

" 'In yonder pasture,' said the taverner, 'I have ten horses whinneying for their oats, five hundred fat sheep, and porkers, and bacon a-plenty. In my cellars I have thirty tuns of wine, all will I sell for him, and I'll furnish every blanket which my credit bought when I was married. And you, who are sent of him, may God abide you while you wash yourselves in the basin, and for the love I bear him I will be honored to serve you with roast and pastry. You shall drink the best wine I have, and if you remain, you shall sleep in comfort. I pray for the better fortune of our world today, and I'll do my part by nourishing you that you may be strong, that you may be brave; for fortune favors the brave.' "

We have cited this lengthy passage not because we attach any great importance to the various details, but by reason of the pleasant contrast it offers to the over long series of occurrences of a different nature, probably more in keeping with actual experience: scenes wherein the churlish behavior, and besotted avarice of the taverners were only too vividly illustrated. In such a welter, one such episode will

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redeem, in a measure, the reek of that flotsam and jetsam which goes, the world over, into the making of the lower strata of tavern life.

The German or Austrian innkeeper who entertained Richard the Lion-hearted was by no means of the kidney of him who offered his all to the service of the soldier of France. He was not ashamed to live and smile as he took the unspeakable orders of his barbarous Austrian master, that nobleman whom Richard had rebuked before Acre.

Legend has it that Richard Plantagenet, pursued by the vengeance of this noble, whose arrogance he had checked in the crusades, was captured on his return homewards, in a miserable tavern. According to the story told by two chroniclers, Phillip Mouskes and the writer who continued the narrative of de Nagis, the English monarch, the better to preserve his identity, had retired to the kitchen of the inn, donned a scullion's smock, and was turning capons as they roasted on the spits before the fire, when he was recognized and placed under arrest.

According to the second chronicler, the facts are these:

"When the king and the templars had disembarked, they found horses ready and mounted at once, setting out for Germany, where they were lodged in a tavern whilst the duke was in residence at the castle. A messenger brought the noble the tidings he was burning to hear.

"'Sire,' said the messenger, 'the moment is fraught with happy omen. The King of England is lodged in the village! See to it that he does not escape you!'

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"The duke was overjoyed at this news, for the king had affronted him before all his people at the siege of Acre. He ordered the gates of the place closed and barred, called his retainers to arms, and proceeded to the inn where the king was lodged, taking with him the author of his information as he knew the king by sight. When the latter discovered that the place where he was lodged was to have visitors, he was surprised, and having no better expedient at hand, he donned a filthy and ragged overgarment, entered the kitchen, and assailed the scullions before the fire, turning the capons which were roasting. I do not maintain that this was the exact truth, but it is what was said on every hand. The duke's people entered the house, searched it from top to bottom, but did not find their man until they had come into the kitchen amongst the templars who were attending to the victuals. Then he who had denounced the ruler entered the kitchen, saw him turning the spit, and called out to his companion knights: 'That is he, take him.' They then laid hands upon the king, and took him prisoner on orders from the duke, as though they designed to hold him for ransom."

The narrative of Mouskes differs but little from that given above, but there are a few points that should be brought out. The Belgian writer lays especial stress upon the incident of the spit, and in addition gives other details. He has it that the king and his suite passed themselves off as merchants. They brought two casks to the tavern with them, and a man who was drinking there recognized the casks as some he had previously seen at Acre. He promptly

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notified the prevost, who came in all haste with his understrappers:

“The host who saw them as they came
Said, ‘Sir, I wonder what is wrong
To bring the prevost and his throng?’ ”

The king was taken by surprise: but he placed the proper construction upon the affair:

It augurs ill for me and mine,
and hastened into the kitchen to help at the cooking:

The spits he then began to turn
Which made the serfs to laughter yearn.

The monarch’s companions were busy preparing the remainder of their meal when the prevost’s guard entered and demanded information as to the identity and standing of those in the kitchen, remarking that they were reported to be merchants. The spy who had recognized the casks renewed his denunciation:

“These casks, that I have seen before
Are proof to me that Richard, sore
Distressed, has taken shelter here.”

He then walked up to the king who was turning the spit, snatched off the latter’s head covering, and identified him. Coeur de Lion laid his hand on the hilt of a butcherknife, intending to defend himself, but the prevost ordered him to put it down.

Let us fill in the tale told by the ancient chronicler and lend color to his naivete by citing here the emphatic declarations brought out by the arrest of the most romantic figure of the crusades. It is from the epic “Philippide,” by Philippe the Breton:

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"Alas! Who can evade the unexpected strokes of fortune, and avoid the dangers which destiny has decreed in advance! especially when the victim, led by chance, is enmeshed in scenes of violence prepared against his coming by astute and calculating malignity, or is brought by the enchantments of fate within the domains of some enemy who had had good time to his measures, an enemy more dangerous than any hazard or peril of the road. What caused the monarch to serve in the kitchen and prepare the viands? Why did this great lord assume the mean habiliments and loathly occupation of the serf? What caused the conqueror to turn aside from his route, change his vestments, and become the least amongst his slaves? A king cannot dissimulate his station any more than can a mountain conceal its lofty eminence. And for this reason, the monarch, though he sought concealment in hiding, was imprisoned by the very expedient to which he trusted most, and that which above all he wished to evade, was bound to befall him. Thus was he taken in hiding, when there was no hiding, and surely he entertained no thought of meeting such a fate."

I know of no more picturesque episode than the arrest of King Richard, while turning the spit, disguised as a tavern scullion, and seeking to defend himself with a butcherknife, unless it be a little chapter in the life of the Great Conde; a man of like temperament, if not even more fearless and vigorous. During the campaign in La Fronde, the general travelled one hundred and twenty leagues, through hostile territory, to rejoin his army which was encamped on the Briare.

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He adopted the disguise of a groom, and whenever it was necessary for him to exercise his calling, he was nobly and notoriously incompetent, heroically maladroit, as it were. Saint Aulaire, who wrote of that feat and of the disguise of the commander, was greatly deceived when he said "that he (Conde) acquitted himself better than his companions, in the calling forced upon them by necessity." The academic historian of the war in La Fronde did not have before his eyes the narrative of Chavagnac, who was one of the guides in the prince's service, nor that of Gourville. These writers are far less flattering to the prince than the author who records his deeds after a lapse of two centuries. However, we should not fail to make suitable allowance for the railings of surly valets, who cursed the exigencies of necessity when their ease was lost to them. Perhaps, after all, this may have been a compliment, as it is a tribute of the finest, when viewed in that light. According to their version, Conde was ordered one day to bridle a horse, and did not know how to go about it. Nor was this the only shortcoming of which he was guilty, for it so happened that one day, in a miserable tavern, located in a stricken village, he was ordered to take a skillet and prepare an omelet. In attempting to turn the delicacy over, he dumped it into the fire.

We will permit Gourville, who was an eyewitness, to relate the adventure of the Great Conde and the burned omelet:

"In the course of one of the military campaigns of the prince," says our author, "we were reduced to meager provisions indeed; having only a few loaves of bread, to which I had added a little wine, some

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strong eggs, some nuts, and a little ch  ese. With these provisions, we marched the whole night long, and entered a village in which there was a tavern. A halt of three or four hours was necessity, and having the eggs, Conde was obsessed with the desire to prepare an omelet. The hostess told him that he must turn it if it was to be cooked through and he, having nodded in comprehension, tried to put her suggestion to practical use, and on his first attempt, threw it bravely into the fire. I besought the hostess to make us another herself, and not leave it to a cook so inexperienced."

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CHAPTER IX.

What we have said of the arrest of Coeur de Lion and of the reception accorded the agents of Du Guesclin, is sufficient to indicate that they found inns of a sort amongst the peoples through whose territories they passed. We shall now introduce a brief excerpt from a twelfth century drinking song to show the hospitable conditions obtaining in Italy in those times. The poem is known as the "Confession of Golias," and it was written, according to Symonds, between the years 1162 and 1165, at Pavia, in Lombardy, and it lays bare the life of the wandering students, the goliards, of whom we have spoken in relating the disturbances between town and gown. Here we have the brilliant and out-at-elbow philosopher of the times, his indiscriminate wenching, his guzzling, his aversion to early rising, and incidentally, the finest drinking song of all time.

'Tis most arduous to make nature's self surrender;
Seeing girls, to blush and be Purity's defender!
We young men our longings ne'er shall to stern law
render,
Or preserve our fancies from bodies smooth and
tender.

Who, when into fire he falls, keeps himself from
burning?

Who within Pavia's walls fame of chaste is earning?
Venus with her finger calls youths at every turning,

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Snares them with her eyes, and thralls with her
amorous yearning.

Such was Pavia, at a time when modernity, in spirit at least, was preparing the setting for the Renaissance.

If you brought Hippolitus to Pavia Sunday,
He'd not be Hippolitus on the following Monday;
Venus there keeps holiday every day as one day;
'Mid these towers in no tower dwells Venus Vere-
cunda.

The gild of the goliards was well known in most of the countries of Western and Southern Europe, though it is said that many of the poems composed by its bards were written in Bavaria and Saxony, Flanders and Lorraine. The scheme of education in the Middle Ages was such that students went from school to school for their lectures in various courses, and Symonds, in the foreword to his "Wine, Women and Song," quotes a twelfth century monk, who writes:

"The scholars are wont to roam around the world and visit all its cities, till much learning makes them mad; for in Paris they seek liberal arts, in Orleans authors, at Salerno gallipots, at Toledo demons, and in no place, decent manners."

Crichton, the hero of Ainsworth's novel, was an excellent example of what the archpoet of the gild may have been; learned, chivalrous, a lover of disputations; yet one well able to satirise society from the neutral ground of vagabondia.

Such homage as they rendered the ecclesiastic

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hierarchy was faint and sometimes sarcastic, yet they lodged in the abbeys when the taverns were closed to them by reason of some loss at dice or through the depredations of their female companions. In the heyday of prosperity, however, none was so brilliant as they, and the tavern rang with their matins and litanies, their roaring Bacchic choruses and drinking songs, while nymphs of the hamlet danced in real of simulated ecstasy, with the finest boon companions that history has to show. A group of these strolling madcaps has more than once come unexpectedly upon some rural scene of delicate and rustic simplicity, when the maids of the village were celebrating the return of spring in folkdances almost as old as the race itself:

“Live we like the gods above; this is wisdom, this is
truth:

Chase the joys of tender love in the leisure of our
youth!

Keep the vows we swore together, lads, obey that
ordinance;

Seek the fields in sunny weather, where the laughing
maidens dance.

Like a dream our prime is flown, prisoned in a study;
Sport and folly are youth's own, tender youth and
ruddy.

There the lad who lists may see which among the
maidens is kind:

There young limbs deliciously flashing through the
dances wind:

While the girls their arms are raising, moving, wind-
ing o'er the lea,

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Still I stand and gaze, and gazing they have stol'n
the soul of me!

Like a dream our prime is flown, prisoned in a study;
Sport and folly are youth's own, tender youth and
ruddy."

But much as the artistic senses of the goliardic
bards were stimulated by the charm and simplicity
of nature and femininity, these hardy realists set still
more store by the tavern and the god of the purple
wine:

"In the second place I own to the vice of gaming:
Cold indeed outside I seem, yet my soul is flaming:
But when once the dice-box hath stripped me to my
shaming,
Make I songs and verses fit for the world's ac-
claiming.

In the third place I will speak of the tavern's pleasure:
For I never found nor find there the least displeasure;
Nor shall find it till I greet angels without measure,
Singing requiems for the souls in eternal leisure.

In the public-house to die is my resolution:
Let wine to my lips be nigh at life's dissolution:
That will make the angels cry, with glad elocution,
'Grant this toper, God on high, grace and absolution!'

With the cup the soul lights up, inspirations flicker;
Nectar lifts the soul on high with its heavenly ichor:
To my lips a sounder taste hath the tavern's liquor
Than the wine a village clerk waters for the vicar."

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Thus we are enabled to see that there was no dearth of taverns in the countries lying between Ultima Thule and Palestine, and there was a system of couriers, the forebears of the modern institution of king's messengers, for whom relays were kept always in readiness. There is extant a miracle play called the "Jou de Saint Nicholas," in which are preserved several scenes relative to the intimate life of the mediaeval taverns, and amongst others, there is an encounter between one of these royal couriers and a boniface. Here we shall see a crowd such as habitually haunted the pothouse; a motley group that would have been better employed in polishing the rust from their arms. They will drink and revel merrily, they will fight and they will gamble, but in spite of everything, they will still be able to sing. They will not blench from robbery or rape, to furnish themselves with the means with which to gamble or buy intoxicants, and they will invariably divide their spoils with the landlord. The scene commences in front of a tavern; the host standing on his threshold, speaks:

Taverner: A good dinner is served inside, hot bread and hot herrings; and wine of Auxerre from a full tun.

Auberon (the courier): What do you sell in there?

Taverner: What the ordinance of the town prescribes. I cheat no one, neither in price nor in measure. Come in.

Auberon: Bring me a pint, host, I'll drink without dismounting, I do not care to stop; I must be on my guard.

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Taverner: Whom do you serve?

Auberon: I serve the king, I carry his seal and his brief.

Taverner: Here, bring this to your head! Drink hearty! The best is at the bottom!

Auberon: This tankard is not so deep but it will serve to sample your wine. How much did you say I was to pay? I can't stay long or I'll get into trouble.

Taverner: Pay me one denier, and the next time you shall have a pint for a white; the price is two deniers, and that's no lie, either, but I'll make it one for you and you can drink again.

Auberon: I'll pay the white now, and the denier later.

Taverner: Would you take the basket along with the wine? You ought to give me three-quarters of a denier at least. I want to know with whom I'm dealing before you get away from here.

Auberon: Mine host, when I come back you shall give me that pint for a denier.

Taverner: That's a guttering candle, my faith; you'll have your trouble for nothing.

Auberon: But I can't settle with you unless I can divide a white into two parts.

Cliquet (bar boy): How about sitting into a little game to amuse ourselves?

Taverner: Did you hear, sire courier? Come, we'll arrange our affair.

Auberon: So be it; one little game for the sake of peace.

Cliquet: One it is, and for as much as you owe.

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Auberon: Then make sure the host knows beforehand.

Cliquet: Not a bad idea! How about it, host, is it a go?

Taverner: Yes, before he changes his mind and goes on.

Auberon: The biggest throw, and without trickery, mind.

Cliquet: They will come all right; I never cheated anyone.

Auberon: By my faith! You have neither a five nor a six; only two treys and an ace.

Cliquet: Seven right! And I thought I knew a little about dice!

Auberon: It's my turn now, my good little friend, and I don't think you'll like your throw.

A little later on, after a scene in which two criers have taken part, one extolling the royal vintages and the other those of the tavern, a dice game is started by Cliquet, Pincede, and other gamesters, who plan the robbery of the king of Africa. As this theft is accomplished with the full connivance of the host, and as it was fraught with some curious and interesting details, we shall introduce it in the proper place.

Cliquet: Come in, Pincede, I'm all alone, and you are welcome.

Pincede: Certainly, Cliquet, and we'll have a drink together.

Cliquet: Why will you mention wine, Pincede, when I've lost everything except my clothes?

Pincede: I'm not so keen on it, come to think, I was only taking a walk down the road.

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Cliquet: Let's drink up one denier, anyway; draw us half a pint, Caignet.

Caignet (to the taverner): Sir, settle with Cliquet before he starts a new score.

Taverner: You owe for one pint, Cliquet, and a denier for your game, and three more on account of the courier; little as it seems, that makes five deniers.

Cliquet: Five deniers be it; it makes no difference; the host will never find me hard to deal with.

Taverner: Caignet, draw this one for Pincede, who has just come, and have it pure.

Caignet: A miserable conquest, this, for we will make no profit from it.

Cliquet: And mind, Caignet, no false measures, Saint Jacques will be down on you if you do, for he is the enemy of those rascals that scorch the public and despoil it.

Pincede: Let's have a candle here, to see how good your intentions are.

Caignet: No sooner said than done. Hold it in your hand. Here are two deniers worth of wine; measure it up unless you're too lazy and want me to dupe you.

Pincede: Pour, Cliquet, and let's drink. I'm so dry my lips are cracking.

Cliquet: Open your mouth and drink then. What's to hinder you? Drink, and may God make it worth your while.

Pincede: God what wine! It is colder than ice! Drink, Cliquet; it's a good covenant to keep. The host don't know what he's selling. This wine would have sold for sixteen times as much some where else.

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A third speaker makes his appearance. He is called Rasoir (Razor). He takes a seat at the table occupied by Cliquet (from the clicking of the dice) and Pincede (the pincher), pays for a drink, and downs it bravely, without wetting his snuzzle, as the proverb has it. Pincede is overcome by such hardihood; "have you been eating herrings, Rasoir," he exclaims. They talk of this and that, and a thousand trifles, and the subject of the African king's treasure comes up. This vast hoard has neither lock, bolt, nor slave to safeguard it; it is very valuable, and the three can easily bear it away without other allies. Rasoir has little faith in this project, and says so, although he is the personification of complacency "if he could believe in it." Pincede, always the gambler, as his name implies, is convinced that they ought to gamble instead; a suggestion which meets with universal approval, and the only thing they cannot decide is the game they should choose.

Cliquet: Shall we throw heads or tails, Pincede?

Rasoir: No, but it would be a fine Christmas gift to have that treasure to divide amongst us three.

But first of all Pincede intended coming to an accomodation with the taverner, and for that purpose he started a discussion which throws a fine white light in the hidden impulses and real natures of those frequenting taverns. Some drinker is for ever seeking to pay less than his scot, and the taverner is always trying to collect more than the amount due him.

Pincede: Lend me eleven deniers; I will owe you seventeen, all told.

Taverner: You are cheating yourself.

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Pincede: Of how much?

Taverner: Of plenty, and I'm afraid it will turn out badly for you.

Pincede: Let's itemize the scot, then.

Taverner: Your first round amounted to three.

Pincede: Eh! Is that so?

Taverner: Then there was one for the customs duties; and three for the game you lost. That's right is is not?

Pincede: That makes a total of five, as I figure it; and if you will advance me eleven, that will make seventeen, does that seem right?

Cliquet: Have a care how you borrow, Pincede; you ought to know well enough that I want good security for what you stake; your mantle fits you so snugly that I am afraid you won't be able to leave the house without it.

Another party is organized and this time the play is with dice. Caignet furnishes them, assuring the gamesters that they are straight, not loaded, and that they are of good quality, and well authorized.

"See for yourself Rasoir," cries Caignet, "I had these shaped for the sheriff himself."

They may gamble to see who shall pay the scot already contracted, or for the drinks to be ordered, but the hardier and more blood thirsty Pincede would prefer playing for coin of the realm, and dry at that, taking the cash and letting the credit go.

Rasoir favors Pincede's design: "A good idea," says he, "let's go." But the game is long drawn out and Caignet bewails the dwindling of his candle.

"Why," he demands querulously, "must you have all this light for nothing? You are enjoying a

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huge candle, while all the world can see that you are gambling in our house."

As this elicits no response, he continues his carping vein, criticising Cliquet who was unwilling to disgorge the deniers he had lost, and Pincede, who demanded them. Amongst such ruffraff arguments over money or wenches are not long in reaching the stage where blows are exchanged and knives drawn.

Each lay violent hold on the other's hair; they tear one another's clothing off and rip it to shreds, and end by ruining each other's cloaks, the sole security upon which the taverner relies for payment of his score. Caignet, who has left them to their diversions through fright, perhaps placing an exaggerated value upon his own skin, screeches at the top of his voice:

"Sire, sire, come quickly, you are losing everything; our securities are in jeopardy, for these ruffians are tearing everything to pieces and neither have a cloak fit to look at now."

Peace is made, thanks to the intervention of the taverner, but at best, it is a precarious truce, and they resume their game, the cause of the trouble. Meanwhile, Cliquet has appealed to Caignet to arbitrate:

"Judge the matter as a friend," he asks, and Caignet, who was probably fat, (his name signifies "lazy-bones," and who detested the acid reaction of scenes of violence, procures a better accord by suggesting that Cliquet buy a drink for Pincede, and that they should drink one another's healths:

"I want you two to be reconciled, if I am to be your judge."

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Cliquet: I'll make you honorable amends, Pincede, and for the sake of peace, I'll treat you to wine.

Pincede: And as far as I'm concerned, Cliquet, I forgive you freely. I know very well that the wine caused you to act as you have.

Curious indeed are the ways of ingrained customs! There is not the slightest embarrassment in their reconciliation: they drink, and if sincerity be possible, they manifest the genuine article in the tavern. "Here's to your health," which literally means "watch my back that no enemy can poignard me while I am drinking, even as I am watching yours." But there are other matters with which to occupy our attention. The taverner begins to yell for his pay, and the gamblers hark back to the subject of the treasure, resolving then and there to gain possession of it.

"A fine conception," says Cliquet, "and one that ought to pay well."

They want the host to become an active participant in their scheme, but in this they are not successful, as that worthy declines to court dangers of which he knows nothing, and refuses to go with them into the dark.

Cliquet: Well, let's drink our fill. We know where the treasure is and the weight of the gold and silver ingots will make us stoop-shouldered. I'll make you a better proposition than any you have ever heard of before. You shall sequester our wealth here in your own house. You shall participate in the division, and as that is the case you need not be uneasy on the score of payment. Your silver shall be so well repaid that you shall have a whole trough

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full of fine gold. Lend us a sack to carry off what we go after.

The bag, which would hold about two bushels, is furnished cheerfully, and our sharpers sally forth. In a very short time they will return laden with gold, for they will have found the king and all the barons sleeping "so deeply that they might have been taken for dead." Profiting by this lucky siesta, our prowlers will make off with a "heavy coffer full of good besants."

Rasoir: Give us a hand. The thing's as heavy as the devil. Here Pincede, give us a hand with the sack, this coffer's as heavy as a paving-stone.

Pincede: Let's all lend a hand. I'm afraid we'll burst the coffer, and that would be a sign of bad luck. I'll show you how strong I am, too, but I want some help in carrying it. Lift it up on my back.

Rasoir: Here it is, we'll relieve you by turns.

Cliquet: And while we're in a good humor, let's determine what will befall us.

Rasoir: Host, host, open the door; your sack has returned. full; we're not deceiving you either.

The taverner opens his door and catches sight of all the gold: "Gentlemen," he exclaims, in wonder, "you have made your words good with deeds. Don't have any mistrust of me, the wine I will serve you will be pure and unadulterated, better than the last; the water spurting from the rocks shall be no purer."

Rasoir: Get a spit ready, Caignet, and let's eat a bite after all our trouble.

Cliquet: A candle, good host, a candle, as quickly as you can get one.

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Taverner: You'll not be without one, I'll see to that.

Caignet: Here's your candle, gentlemen, and wines better than any you have had yet, too.

Rasoir: It was a happy hour, my faith it was, that saw the barrelling of a wine as good as this.

After the wine, the game goes on again, and while it is in progress, there is more wine; they react quickly to the double stimuli of alcohol and gaming, for they are no longer playing for deniers and whites, but for good besants: at last, however, the sandman comes, and Rasoir, who is winner, wants to go to bed.

Rasoir: Listen, good host, we are very tired, the whole night long we have remained wide awake; we'll divide, share and share alike, as friends, but first of all we want to sleep.

When they are asleep, Saint Nicholas, the guardian spirit whom the king of Africa has invoked to discover the names of the robbers of his treasury, appears to them in a dream, to demand restitution, and in a voice of terrible omen, he said:

"Doers of evil, enemies of God, even while you sleep, you are taken, snared without a single resource. In appropriating the treasure you committed a crime, and the host was equally guilty in that he concealed the booty and the crime."

Pincede: What wakened me? God, I was sound asleep but an instant ago!

Thereupon Saint Nicholas continued his frank denunciation:

"You sons of whores, you are as good as dead at this moment; the pitchforks are ready: unless you

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heed my advice your very lives are forfeit. I am Saint Nicholas whose business is with lost things and men, to show them the right road. Get you gone and return the king his treasure. You were guilty of the greatest folly when you dared to even think of taking it. Even the image which stood guard over the treasure should have warned you off; see that it also is returned, along with the gold; take care that not a farthing is missing, if you value your bodies. Place the image on guard over it again and get you gone without delay."

The saint's anathema promptly convinced Pincede, Rasoir and Cliquet that their time was come, and their ardor to repair their crime and prevent untoward consequences carried them beside themselves. They undertook to transport the treasure back to the place from which it came, and at once. The host, who had not been included in the promise of immunity, was a rogue more indurated than his guests, failed to understand them when they spoke of restitution, but he took a flat stand upon full payment of his score before even they set foot outside his establishment.

Taverner: If you have committed some crime, gentlemen, I want no part of it; get yourselves out of my house, and be quick about it, too, for I want no profits from such a source as that. I handle no hot goods.

Pincede: My good host, you were an accomplice; the time has come to speak the truth, and you ought to have an equal part in the punishment of the crime if you share equally in the proceeds.

Taverner: Out of here, you sons of whores!

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You gluttons! You would shift the blame upon me, would you? Caignet, get the scores ready, and collect them, and then run these bastards out of my house.

Caignet, to carry out his orders, set himself to strip Cliquet of his mantle; for in circumstances such as these, when there is nothing in the pockets of a mantle, the mantle itself must pay the scot. Pincede changed his mind, however, and wanted to take tithe of the treasure before carrying it back.

Pincede: Gentlemen, you may take my word for it, that each of us can take a handful of these besants and they will never be missed.

Cliquet: Hold your tongue, you felon, you'll bring bad luck down on us and we shall all be punished.

Rasoir: Let's take it back where we got it, and the image along with it.

Thoughts like these are not more enduring than repentance, however, which, amongst such scum represents, at most, a mere twinge of conscience, engendered by imminent danger of punishment, and once the treasure was returned, they at once fell to planning other thefts, and dreamed of other worlds to conquer.

The intimate details of Mediaeval tavern life are very apparent from the foregoing. Drinking, and plenty of it; gambling, and enough; thievery, and more than enough. The landlord is always a participant, oftentimes indirectly in the transaction, but directly in the profits. He is generally a shining example of indurated malfeasance and low cunning from whom the others have much to learn. When

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Saint Nicholas failed to offer our taverner immunity it was not from forgetfulness, nor was it by accident. All other callings left a few scattered germs of feeble repentance in their votaries, but the vintner was of a stuff too rocky to nourish a growth so soft. The tableau given above is contemporary evidence of the infamy of the lower orders of those following this profession. They head the list of social incorrigibles and were ever the hardest recruiters of the unfair, yet their vitality, like that of the sewer rat, has caused them to survive in any and all circumstances, even in countries where legislation and stupid reform have sought to render them impotent, and the author of *Renard* was not mistaken when he wrote his description of the bonifaces of his own times:

“And what shall I say of the tavern keepers? I love good wine and a crackling fire, and I must not lose my place at the hearth. I must be cautious, and I cannot do them full justice. Could a tavern be found where thieves were unknown, where trickery was not in vogue, it would require a lifetime of searching. Of all callings, that of innkeeper is the worst; and the truth itself forces the unwilling admission that, amongst the whole profession, there is a multitude of infamous scoundrels, but not a single man who is honest or who is loved.”

Langland, in his “*Vision of Piers Plowman*,” has given us a turbulent evening in a tavern of the fourteenth century. Then as ever, the ale house was the common meeting ground of the village, and the tinker, and the cobbler, hermit and clerk of the church foregather to drink and gossip in an atmosphere that is without restraint. Round follows round. The

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ichor of the ale gets to their very finger-tips, and the tap-room becomes a storm center of swirling and gusty discussion, or of seething malice. Every flushed face is clearly seen; coarse epithets are heard on every side, guffaws of riotous laughter shake the rafters, and the stealthy advances of pickpocket or satyr can be caught by the practised eye. In 1407, William Thorpe declared that pilgrims were frequenters of taverns of ill fame, "spending their goods upon vitious hostelars, which are oft uncleane women of their bodies." The selection from Langland will bear this statement out.

"Thomme the tynkere and tweye of hus knaves,
Claryce of Cockeslane the clerk of the churche,
Hicke the hakeneyman and Howe the neldere
Syre Peeres of Prydie and Purnel of Flanders,
An haywarde and an hermyte the hangeman of
Tyborne,

Dauwe the dykere with a dosen harlotes,
Of portours and of pyke-porses and pylede toth-
drawers:

Ther was lauhyng and lakeryng and 'let go the
coppe!"

Bargeynes and bevereges by-gunne to aryse,
And seten so til evesong rang."*

* Piers the Plowman—Ed Skeat—Text C, passus vii, 11. 364-70:

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CHAPTER X

We come at last to a curious little work entitled "La Maniere De Langage, Qui enseigne a parler et a ecrire le Francaise." This little treatise, first published in the "Revue Critique," for 1870, pp 373 et seq., was composed by an Englishman for Englishmen, and its purpose, as set forth by the author himself was to teach his countrymen to speak correctly and write "sweet French according to the usage and custom of France."

This little work was composed anterior to 1396, and probably within a few months of the riots at the University of Orleans. The author had travelled in France, (he tells us this in his last chapter), and it is evident that he tried to set down with fidelity the tone of the conversation in the various classes of society. The faithful descriptions of the manners and customs of the times are well worth the study of the antiquarian, and the tavern scenes more than confirm the evidence of contemporary authorities. He shows us the manner in which the guest came to terms with the hostess, whether the hospitality was gratuitous or paid for, and the demand which the traveller made upon the mistress of the inn, without the slightest embarrassment, shows us that it was not in poetry alone that the guest of a day could demand the uttermost favor from his hostess, or from one of her maids. Who has not read Sterne's

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Sentimental Journey? Were the times so changed, in the course of three centuries.

The whole work is so interesting; so unusual because of the virile spirit of the *médiaevalism* of the masses with which it pulsates, that no attentive reader will lay it down before reading it to the end.

Although the author has travelled in France, and was a lover of the land as well as the language, he was not master of the idiom in which he wrote. He frequently employs English words and constructions, and constantly has recourse to the imperfect tense, where the idiom of the romance tongues would require the preterit, but these little slips are by no means disagreeable; on the contrary, they only impart an added flavor to a piece of writing which, in itself is charming. Had I the space, I would give the entire work, but my citations must, of necessity, be limited to extracts from Chapters III. and XIII.

Chapter III.: Now I will show you how a man riding or tramping ought to conduct himself and speak on his route, if he wishes to go far beyond the limits of his country. And first, the gentleman will speak in this manner to his varlet, before his departure:

"Janyn," (or whatever his name may be) "come here.

"My lord, I am here. What is your pleasure?"

"Lead my horses to the blacksmith to be shod, if there be one here, and if they have good shoes and a forge, and if they forge well."

"My lord, it shall be done."

And then the varlet goes to the smithy and gives the orders of his master. As soon as the varlet re-

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turns from the farrier, the master will speak to him thus:

"Janyn, have you done (as I told you)?"

"Certainly, my master," or "Yes, master, perfectly."

"Go at once, and give them some hay, and oats, and bread, for I will start on my way as soon as I have dined, and perhaps I will return whole, though I have much to do in the districts of the province. Set the table now, Janyn, for it is high time to dine."

"Willingly, my master."

He then goes to set the table and lays the cloth and clean linen, after which he brings salt-cellars, and then plates full of eggs and puts them on the table, then he goes to get the bread, not stale, but bread as well risen, white and wheaten, as any he can find in all the world. Then he brings vermillion claret and white wine, very gracious and amiable to drink. Then the master, or one or another of his squires, will address him graciously in this manner:

"Janyn, my friend, go to the kitchen and ask if the meat is ready yet."

"It will be served at your order, my master."

Then he will go to tell the cook to look at it and keep it until everything is ready, while the master goes to wash and to sit. Thereafter, his squires and varlets will serve him with much good meat: and you must know that the first course will consist of turnip soup, if it be in the summer season, and if it be winter, leeks or peas with bacon or in thick soup. After that they will serve a huge chunk of meat, such as beef, mutton, pork, or veal.

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At the second course they will serve capons, hens and pullets in large pies.

The third course will consist of eggs, suckling pigs and little porkers on skewers, swans, grouse, herons, bitterns, plovers or partridge, and many other wild birds.

For the last course they will serve him cheese, pears, apples and nuts.

"Janyn, clear the table at once, and go saddle my horses, but when you bridle Morelle take good care he does not bite you. And bring them outside the door of the room when you have done this, for I will mount."

Then the master comes out, mounts the horse and rides on his way. When he comes to the end of the village, he will ask of one old trot or another:

"Gammer mine, which is the way towards Aurlians?"

"I will tell you, my master. You will ride straight by this road and when you come to where there is a valley you will see a little before you a hedge. Here you will find two roads and a cross. Leave the cross on the right hand and take the road on the left. You will then come to a great forest, where there is a great nest of thieves, so people say. Beware of them, my master, for they will do you much harm. God conduct you, my master, and give you honor and joy of whatever you love."

"God bless you, good woman," or "may God walk with you," and then the master commences to sing.

And when the song is done he will speak to his squire or squires in this manner:

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"It is almost night, my friends."

And Janyn will make answer as follows: "My lord, you speak truly."

"I believe it would be better for us to stop in that village than to go further today. What do you think?"

"It shall be as you wish, my lord."

"Janyn!"

"My lord."

"Get you on ahead and take lodgings for us betimes."

"So will I do, my lord," and he sets out at once, and when he has come to to an inn, he speaks very courteously, in this manner:

"Hostler, hostler!"

And from behind the closed doors, the other answers scornfully, thus:

"Who is there? Friends?"

"You wenching vagabond, why didn't you answer, the first time I called at the door? I pray that God will make your jaws chatter so that your whole body will shiver for making me wait out here so long. You know that it's colder now than it has been all year, with the snow and sleet and hail beating down so that the water is covered with ice. Open the door and let me in before I hack my way through it. I will, so help me God."

"Don't carry on so, good sir, I'll open it directly."

The hostler hastens to open the door, and when he has done this he looks the stranger over.

"Holy Mary," he exclaims, "Are you out there, Janyn?"

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washes them well and thoroughly. When this is done to his satisfaction, he skewers them with a spear, for roasting. When they are done to a turn, he withdraws the spear, and when this stage has been reached, the lord will have arrived at the hostel.

It is very interesting to note his ingenious method of ascertaining in advance whether the establishment will meet with his approval. His tactics are direct and forceful, and meet with the reward they deserve. We resume the tale to the stamping of his charger's hoofs:

The mistress of the inn, or one of her maids comes to him and says:

"You are very welcome, my lord."

"And how are you, madame?"

"Very well, my lord, God be thanked, and better that I see you in fine health."

"Yes in truth, I am feeling fine and having a good time of it."

"Ah! My lord, it has been long since I saw you."

"Indeed mistress mine, you speak the truth. And tell me, lovely lady, have you not some pretty girls, as of yore?"

"And it please you, my lord, I have two or three lovely and very gracious beauties with graceful figures, and so slender of waist that you could span them with your two hands."

"So! Let these pretty wenches come before me, one and all, for I will not dismount from my horse before having seen them."

Thereupon the girls file into the presence of the nobleman.

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"These are pretty chits, none prettier, and they have the finest figures; God be thanked they are as choice as any in my manor of N———— and I will give them gold and silver and other good things and even houses."

The noble guest then descends from the saddle and demands the names of the charmers, speaking in this manner:

"What are your names, sweethearts mine?" to which the eldest maid replies:

"And it please you, my lord, I am called Isabelle," and the other, "I am called Margarete, and I pray God to do well by you."

"Isabelle, come here. Come! My sweet charmer, I mean no villainy by you, but honor."

"Gladly, my lord, I am yours to command."

Thereupon does the nobleman embrace the maid and kiss her sweetly upon the mouth, and set himself gracefully to make good and fervent love, in the manner of the poets. When he has finished his lyric, the guest takes his fancy by the hand and leads her into the house where he will sup.

"You are to dine with me, my lady."

"Many thanks, my lord."

He then calls his varlet by name: "Janyn," says he, "is our supper ready yet?"

"Yes, my lord, you may sit down whenever you please."

"Set the table, and bring us claret or wine to drink, for I am very thirsty and hungry," and when he has drunk and the girl with him, he should speak to her in this manner:

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"Come here, mistress mine, for you must sit in this chair with me."

"And it please you, my lord, I had rather not."

"By the Lord, do as I tell you!"

"Your mercy, my lord."

And thereafter his lordship and the girl are served with many good viands to eat. The nobleman does everything in his power to make her evening enjoyable:

"Are you having a good time, my lady?"

"Yes, my lord, a very good time, thanks to God and to you."

"And I am having the finest of evenings, for you are more appealing to me than any other woman in all the world. I thank God I was able to procure the viands that suited your tastes."

After the supper had been finished, the nobleman ought to make love to the maid, avow his passion and pay tribute to her maidenhead; he should kindle in her a raging furnace of passion by singing her a love song as gracious and amorous as any heard in all the world, and when the song is done he ought to address the damsel in this manner:

"My love, have I sung the song so that it reached your heart?"

"Ah, my lord, your song has kindled flames in my heart and even in my blood."

The nobleman should then take the damsel by the hand and openly plight his troth on the pledge of his body, that he will have none other than she during the term of her life; and he should say:

"My love, I take you here as my playmate, and by this am I betrothed to you."

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Thereupon the nobleman frolics with his mistress to his heart's content, and while in an expansive mood he lavishes gifts upon the hostess of the inn and her assistants.

The alewife is made richer or poorer by a beautiful girdle of fine green silk; each of the sergeants receive three sous and four deniers sterling; while the kitchen wenches are enraptured with purses of green velvet corded with fine red silk, elegant in appearance and strongly made, and in addition, each of them is given two deniers sterling.

Then the lordly lover and his mistress, and all the gentle company make merry and revel in a way marvellous to see. The squires and officers are ordered to bring spices and drink; they bring in a host of tapers, at least fifty in all, and then they bring in three scintillating basins encrusted with precious stones in the manner of the Saracens; the chargers are filled to overflowing with all manner of spices, and they gleam and glitter in the fitful light of the candles. Good beer is found, and excellent wines, such as claret, vermillion and white. Likewise they fetch in sweet wines such as those of Greece, hyppocras, Montrose, Runey, Vernage, Malvoisin, Alsatian, sherry, and spiced wine, together with such other vintages as are available. Other drinks there are also; cider, pear-cider, and spiced beers.

When all these things have been attended to, cornet and clarinet players are brought into the presence of the nobleman. They begin to play with all their might, and the lord and his squires bow and weave, dance, drink, and sing wonderful songs without leaving off until midnight. And when they

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have become so weary that they can no longer enjoy the dancing, their host should speak in this manner:

"My friends, it is past midnight, and it is high time that we get to bed. Janyn, conduct my mistress to the chamber."

And when morning has come he shall do his devoir and wish her good morning; thereafter he will call his varlet by name:

"Janyn, are you sleeping?"

"No, my lord."

"What are you doing then?"

"An it please your lordship, I was thinking."

"Get up, then. The devil and his mother and all take you. Why did you not call me this morning as I told you to?"

"On my oath, my lord, I meant to."

"Ha! You lie in your throat. What is the hour now?"

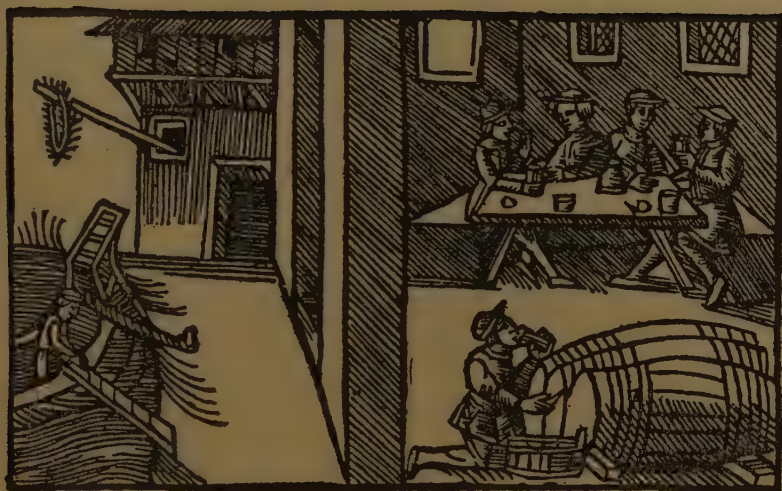
"My lord, it is not morning yet."

"What matters it! Get up, and get dinner ready."

Thereupon the nobleman gets up, puts on his shirt, doublet, hose and shoes. And when he is completely clad and apparelled he will rap the side of the chamber next the windows, and there water will have been placed to wash his hands and linen to dry them. And the mistress of the inn will come and speak in this fashion:

"How did you spend the night, my lord?"

"Very well indeed, madame, thanks to you, but I feel a trifle ill this morning, for I drank much and had a wakeful night. Janyn, bring me my comb that my mistress may comb my hair, and tell the hostler



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to water my horses and give them hay and oats, and see that we have plenty of good fish, such as eels, little lampreys, big lampreys, salmon both fresh and salted, as well as carp, breams, roaches, perch, soles, plaice, barbels, and the like. After having breakfasted, and made inquiries as to the road, he bids his hostess adieu, mounts his horse, kisses the girl who was his companion, gives her thirty francs to requit the entertainment and favors he has received, bids her farewell, and sets off for Aurilians, or as we know it today, Orleans."

Such is the little sketch we have taken bodily from that incomparable book of fourteenth century etiquette and conversation, designed to serve the insular Britisher in foreign lands. That it is far more fertile than our latter day manuals of etiquette is evident, as they merely teach the lounge lizard to practice his art more gracefully, or instruct the obese and roaring forties in the arts that made Lysistrata famous, and the poisonous courtesy that has made them possible will bring its own reward in time.

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CHAPTER XI

There remains another interesting bit to be set down from this brief but vivid glimpse into the inner life of that olden time, and it is from Chapter XIII. The legend above the chapter promises much, and runs as follows:

The Manner of Speaking Between Companions
Who Lodge Together in an Inn When
They Ought to Go to Bed.

"William, have you made our bed?"

"Not yet."

"You are very careless, for our bed is yet to be made. Shift your stern, and get the bed made, I pray you, for I could sleep very soundly were I in bed."

"Ha! Good sir, let me warm my feet first, for I am very cold."

"For shame! How can you say that when it is so hot?"

"Light the candle and go and draw some wine."

"Go yourself if you want any, as for myself, I will not drink today."

"If you are so perverse that you won't get anything to drink, I will get some wine for myself and Jehan, and by the living God, if I can prevent it, you shall have nothing to drink today because of your evil disposition."

"You are very nasty Perot. I pray that God will give you a touch of brimstone."

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"Shut your mouth, you bloody, merdous scullion, you mangy mongrel, evil-tempered horned wench that you are, or you'll get such a smack that you'll feel it for four days."

Thereupon he slaps the other resoundingly on the cheek, and says:

"There's your godly brimstone, what have you to say to it?"

The other commences to weep:

"I pray God," he wails, "that you break your backside before ever you stir from here!"

"And I'll do you worse damage, so help me God, if you pester me any more."

"I'll take no more of your beating; I have enough saved and prefer living where no one knows me to remaining in lodgings here."

"Now William, don't be peevish! I will do you no more harm. Let us have a drink and go to bed. Where are you going, William?"

"I am going upstairs."

"Good sir, I would ask you to cover the fire first, and remove the rubbish and brands and shovel the coals and embers together into a pile, remove the ashes underneath, and then we will go to bed."

And after all this has been done, they mount to their chamber above. When they have arrived there one will say to the other:

"Where is Bryket, the little dog, and that little bitch Florete?"

"I do not know where Bryket has gone, but Florete is asleep among the oaks down in the garden."

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"William, get your clothes off and wash your legs and dry them with a cloth and rub them well for the love of the fleas, that they may not jump on your legs, for there is a great peck of them lying in the dust under the rushes."

When they have gotten to bed one says to the other:

"Move over there; for you are so cold I cannot bear to have you touch me; and let's get to sleep, for God's sake, for I have things to keep me awake for the past two nights."

"Hi! The fleas bite me so and do me much harm and damage, and I have scratched my back so hard that it is bleeding, and now I am itching all over, and my body burns so badly that by tomorrow I can go to pot without any danger of being burned." (Written at Bury Saint Edmonds, on the eve of Pentecost in the year of grace one thousand three hundred eighty and sixteen.)

Thus ends the most graphic description of the intimate details of life in the Middle Ages, that it has ever been my pleasure to see. The author, whoever he may have been, was a close observer of what went on around him, and in him the faculty of memory must have been well developed. His grasp of details leaves nothing to the imagination, and it is possible, nay even probable, that some of the flowers in his garden may be deemed a trifle too exotic for modern nostrils. Solomon had a multitude of wives and concubines; the same was true of Mahomet, the lordling in our pastel did his duty well and nobly, and is it necessary to remind carping purists, that these

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were men as well qualified to perform prodigies of endurance as to cavil at them.

But to resume our narrative:

In time of war, when troops were on the move from country to country, the taverns, especially those along the great roads, were jammed with men-at-arms, of every sort and condition; archers, cross-bowmen, militiamen, cavalry, in fact, every branch of the military service. Far from contributing to the security of the inns and pothouses, the presence of fighting men served only to render them still more dangerous.

In writing of this situation in the *Recherches de la France*, Pasquier remarks that "it is characteristic of our century for armed men whose purpose is to eat some old man out of house and home to go upon foraging expeditions,"* and, truth to tell, they only followed the excellent examples set them by their predecessors, and notwithstanding the fact that the term "picoree" was coined in the sixteenth century, we may not concede its contemporaries the honor of having invented that for which it stood. In the sight of these swaggering roisterers, everything they did was right; they took their fun where they found it, as Kipling has said, and stood upon as little ceremony with venison as with wenches, poultry, or gold: in a word, there was scarcely a single commodity in the markets which did not fit admirably into their scheme of things, and a jolly expression in the *Conte de Eutrapel*, used by some scintillating glutton or other, has it that "he was accoutered in tasty gar-

* Lib. VIII, Chap. III.

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ments which damoiselle Picoree had fashioned and sewn."

The laws pertaining to pillaging and pillagers were stringent to the point of savagery; they provided terrible punishments, in cases where convictions were obtained, and these decrees were barbarously executed. An archer who chanced to be billeted upon any citizen of the realm had to exercise great care, as he was prohibited from appropriating anything to his needs. What he consumed he was bound by order to pay for. Capons cost six deniers each, chicken retailed for four, and sheep for five, as we are informed from the decree promulgated in January, 1514, and preserved in the compilations of Fontanon.

But in spite of every precaution to safeguard the rights of personal property, the sheep vanished, and the soldiers rendered the fat, hoof and hide. No man-at-arms was supposed to pass more than one night with the same citizen, and such soldiers as were quartered upon the burghers had their names inscribed over the door of the house, in order that the quartermaster, who had details such as these in charge, could keep lists of those living without the barracks, check the conduct of the enlisted men, and make his report to the officer in command. In cases in which members of the armed forces were convicted of statutory offenses against women, or of robbery, there was no appeal from the sentence imposed by either the lieutenant or the captain.

The address and hardy assurance of the men-at-arms stole most of the legal thunder, however, and rendered the decrees all but impotent. Then as al-

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ways, fortune favored the bold, and military courts and boards of investigation were confronted with insuperable difficulties in procuring the evidence necessary to conviction, and the burgher and peasant were never immune, in that age, to the rapine and pillaging of the military. When the hut of some Jacques Bonhomme, (as the peasant is called in the edict of Francis I), lay in the line of march of great armies, or of bodies of men such as the famous "Scorchers" commanded by the Duke of Bourbon, out and out highwaymen reprieved from the gallows and enlisted in regiments, hell itself would have been paradise enough, for they plundered him of all he had without the slightest scruple and burned everything to the ground if they met resistance, threw the erstwhile owner's corpse into the funeral pyre, and thus destroyed the material evidence of their crimes.

But woe betide the wretched straggler who fell into the clutches of the outraged inhabitants, or the advance guard that was trapped in some village street. In the first instance, the natives would avenge the outrages they had suffered; in the second, they endeavoured to secure advance payment for those that were sure to come. Ferocious reprisals were the order of the day, and any guide who lost his way was doubly in jeopardy: his employers would execute him the instant they turned suspicious, and the burghers would hack him to pieces if he fell into their hands. Victims thus sacrificed on the altar of official expediency or revenge, were stripped of everything they possessed, their effects were fought and gambled over by those surviving for a brief spell and the *lex talionis* played a sinister and sometimes

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a fatal part in every campaign of the times; frequently forcing itself upon the attention of the very crown itself. The records furnish many cases in which the guilty have applied, by petition, for amnesty and pardon, sometimes after years of vagabond wandering in foreign lands, and one case in particular, shall be recorded because of the curious and lurid sidelight it throws on contemporary sociology, and further, since the leading part was played by a publican.

The document bears the date of February 10, 1447, and the reigning monarch, Charles VII, deems it advisable and in keeping with the public interest to grant amnesty and pardon to several peasants and to the aforesaid taverner, for the crime of murder, committed upon the bodies of two men-at-arms serving in the company of one Rodriguo de Villandrando.

“Charles. . . . Know ye by these presents that we have received the humble petition of Anthoine de Saint Pol, Jehan Baron, Martin Dumont, Barthelemi Chavel, and Pererrin Fournier; all residents of the parish of Saint Just d’Avray. The said petition states that, fourteen years ago or thereabouts, in the times of Rodriguo de Villandrando, captain of men-at-arms, two men-at-arms from the company of the said officer went to the tavern kept by the said Anthoine and informed they were to be billeted in his house and that they would pay him for whatever he furnished to them. Anthoine lodged them in tavern, supplying them with hay, oats, bread, meat, and other things to them necessary and convenient, excepting wine, of which he had none to supply.

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"After they had supped and groomed their horses, and were asleep there in the stable, Anthoine, seeing that they slept, and considering his afflictions; the ransoms he had been compelled to pay, the plundering to which he had been forced to submit, and the wrongs and other evils, as heavy as they were innumerable, which had damaged his substance and that of other residents of the district, and considering further, that these torts had been received at the hands of the troops, commanded by this said officer, he went out of his tavern, and hastened, unseen by either his woman or by anyone else in his establishment, to the inns and houses of Jehan Baron and Martin Dumont, whom he found in the places afore-said. He then betook himself to the church where he encountered Barthelemi Chavel and Pererrin Fournier, and to each of them he spoke of the two men-at-arms lodged in his tavern, as he supposed well supplied with gold and silver, and he suggested and compounded with them that they all, acting together, despoil his lodgers of everything they possessed. They then covenanted and arranged the manner in which their design was to be effectuated, and the rendezvous at which they were to meet, this being near a pillar within cross-bow shot of the chapel of Saint Laurens.

"When they had foregathered at the rendezvous, they debated whether they should slay the men-at-arms, or leave them to their evil courses, and they finally decided upon the former solution. To make their intent a certainty, and to prevent the consequences of publicity, they armed themselves with boar spears, with the single exception of Martin Du-

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mont, who carried a bill-hook on his shoulder. Going together to the tavern at Anthoine, they lay in ambush around the place, whilst Anthoine entered the cellar or stable in which the men-at-arms were sleeping, with their horses, and opened the door, that his accomplices might gain entrance and take the men-at-arms by surprise. This was done successfully, and the captives, after being bound, were led, together with their horses, to the middle of a wooden tract known as the forest of Sapey. The cavalcade arrived there at about the hour of midnight. Anthoine, Chavel, and Fournier had the elder prisoner in charge while Baron kept guard over the younger.

"Fournier asked both of the men-at-arms whether he should confess them, a thing very repugnant to their inclinations. The elder used his utmost endeavours to free himself, and Anthoine, seeing this, and doubting not that if they made their escape, he and all he held dear would be destroyed by the military, ran him through the throat with his own sword, which the said Antoine had found lying on the ground in his stable, and had brought along.

"And Baron did away with the younger soldier, using a poignard he had taken from the captive's belt.

"In the meantime, Martin Dumont was holding the prisoners' horses at the edge of the woods, and distant from the scene of the tragedy about the range of a cross-bow bolt. They left the dead bodies, clad only in their shirts, shoes, and greaves, for they had despoiled them of their cloaks, chaperons, bonnets, and other habiliments which they had, but notwithstanding their leisure to prosecute a thorough search,

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they found not a solitary denier. After having carried through their design, each of the suppliants betook himself to his own tavern or roof-tree, with the exception of the said Martin Dumont. He led the animals away to another forest known as that of Fraymer, where he kept them until the following morning, when he took them to a tavern known as that of Les Salles. Here he remained with the beasts, to watch them for two or three days; in fact, until the night arrived, in which the suppliants were to assemble at that tavern. After some deliberation, Dumont and Fournier were delegated to sell the horses at Vienne. This they did, masking their identities by donning the cloaks of the dead men-at-arms. When they had collected the nine good and honest crowns, which was the price they received for their merchandise, they returned to the tavern, and there, at about the hour of nine, they divided amongst themselves the spoils taken from their murdered victims, in such wise that to each and all of them fell a portion as fair and as nearly just as possible. When their affair had been carried through to completion, they became apprehensive lest they should attract the unwelcome attention of justice and, doubting not that the affair must come to the notice of our officials or of those of our very dear and amiable cousin, the Duke of Bourbonnoys, and walking in fear of that justice, they fled the country, not daring to return thereto, unless assured in advance of our mercy, clemency, and pardon, by a letter carrying remission of their crimes.

“As they acted only after unendurable pillaging had well nigh ruined them, after ransoms had

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drained them dry, after experiencing the plundering and looting of their homes, and other evils, damages, inconveniences, and under the stress of innumerable cruelties and acts of tyranny, and whereas, in the times in which these crimes were committed all the rustic dwellers in Saint Just were beleaguered in the church, or at least the greater part of them, by the armed forces of occupation, and whereas the said suppliants were beside themselves and utterly despaired of ever recouping their losses, incurred because of these same forces of occupation, and whereas, in other things, they are people of good fame, well known and of honest conversation, we have granted them remission and pardon."

The greater part of this long letter of amnesty had been reproduced not only because of its curious character, and the unusual details with which it is packed, casting, as it does, a vividly lurid light upon the social conditions and thoughts of the times, but also because one of our tavern keeping fraternity, the host of the tavern known as that of Les Salles so easily reconciled his conscience to his interest by giving sanctuary to Dumont and the horses. He must have been well aware that they were stolen, yet he placed his establishment at the convenience of these cut-throats who came to his pothouse at night to concert their plans for the sale of the horses and the division of the spoils.

It is but further evidence that, after some dark stroke of policy, whether of business or thievery, it was the custom to seek sanctuary in the tavern nearest to hand and there divide the proceeds which had accrued. In the present instance, the wily boni-

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face had a specious and convenient excuse for his connivance, and if it be true, as Dr. Johnson has said, that "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel," the affair offered him a classical opportunity to take reprisals in return for the ferocious pillaging and rapine to which the populace had been subjected.

"In the Prague campaign," says an old chronicler, "the dauphin, the Duke of Bourbon, and many nobles, with a huge concourse of the greatest robbers and rascals in all Christendom, a crew of rapscallions which with great propriety, he called his "Scorchers," waged such horrible and unremitting warfare against Jacques Bonhomme (the peasant), that no one dared to show his face in one of these towns. Whenever they caught sight of any strangers, they challenged them with a "Who goes there?" and if the unknown happened to belong to their party, well and good; if not, they stripped them and held them to ransom. And it is a fact that the wayfarer could ransack a dozen places without finding a single thing to eat or drink.

"Others, still more fortunate, were either murdered outright, or choked into submission, no matter whether they were priests or clerks, monks or nuns, ministers or heralds, women or children."

In the reign of Charles VI, measures were taken to correct many of these outrages by removing their causes from the realm or from the world.

"Turbulent disturbers of the peace, some of whom were banished for their crimes by the justice of our realm, were dealt with. They had brought together in assembly, people of evil intent and perverse condition, they had trampled upon the realm, invad-

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ing castle and home, being especially drawn by the establishments vested in noble vassals or churchmen; taking married women by force, violating nuns, maids and others, as beasts in their lairs, doing the good and simple people, such as merchants, laborers, and citizens who did not think evilly, to death. Our ancient enemies, the English, could have done no worse."

Another passage, from a rhymed chronicler of the times will serve admirably to complete the picture of the ravage-wrecked land whose fields and hedgerows were points of vantage from which a multitude of brigands, recruited from amongst the most ferocious and despicable dregs of all nations, preyed upon the inhabitants, and gave quarter to no living being or thing.

"The noble realm is convulsed. It writhes in the throes of confusion, brought about by a great horde, a fusion of men from many nations. English, Scotch, Bretons, Normans; all have pooled their interests to invade our country and make it their home. For their service, they recruit the criminal classes; they have twenty-five captains, to say nothing of knights and squires in plenty, whose sole ambition is to pillage France where there remains neither steer, cow, nor sheep to butcher, no bread to eat, nor meat, goose, wine, nor capon. Every pillager, traitor, felon is enrolled in the ranks of which I have spoken."

Sir Walter Scott has given a graphic description of those times in his *Quentin Durward*, and the Scotch Guard of Louis XI, was but a gathering of the best Erse elements which had gone into the realm of France for lucrative employment such as is

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hinted at in the excerpt quoted above. Passages such as those from which we have quoted, furnish the most positive evidence of the extent to which the horrid ravages committed by these murderous parasites had injured the country. In the face of such facts as these, we may be brought to look more complacently upon such affairs as the murder of the two men-at-arms, or the quiet translation of guides who led the vanguard of the hosts of destruction. Looked upon as justifiable reprisals, inflicted because of the tortures which led up to them, and which had gone too long unpunishable, they were, after all but the expression of a society that still hangs its murderers, and permits its female Locustas to go scot free, unless, of course, they be old and fat.

Whenever the military made its presence felt, the boniface suffered along with the rest of the community, and the spectacle afforded by an advance guard of archers as they topped a distant hill was one of evil omen; it augured crowded houses better furnished with knives than with money, bickering and brawling, and destruction of life and property, especially that of the host himself.

Some cities, such as Bordeaux were exempt from charges upon their citizens, for the billeting of the military, by royal letters as of January 20, 1451. The tavern keepers were therefore compelled to lodge their armed rabble, whereas in other cities, in which the royal prerogative did not operate, the citizens themselves were forced to throw open their homes and sometimes even their beds to the most degraded gathering of ne'er-do-wells to be found in all the Christian world. In the ordinance of 1514, there

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were special clauses dealing with the gendarmerie which absolved the citizens from giving hospitality to the ragamuffin man-at-arms who rode in on his string-haltered and crop-eared nag, mute but eloquent evidence of his station in life, if not of his aspirations. Such as he shall apply to the tavern keeper, and that worthy shall have the honor of lodging him under his roof, as the homes of the citizens came under the curt regulation "Officers Only" and were reserved for such as pranced proudly in on champing chargers; knights of high rank and noble birth.

The publican lost valuable patronage because of this police law, as many of those who came to him were outside the pale. Though they may have desired earnestly to pay their score, they were without the means. Two sous per diem per man was the allowance and the price of a table d'hôte at an inn was two sous, as we learn from the expense accounts of the provost of Paris, for the year 1441, interesting comment upon which is to be found in the works of Sauval.

The taverner found himself in a difficult situation on account of this ration. Even if the soldier were willing to assign his entire allotment to the vintner, he could pay for but the one meal a day, and the rest had, of necessity, to be furnished free. But the cases of improvident and penniless malcontents, and there were relatively as many then as now, presented his most difficult problems. They might have only their mantles or swords left as security for their scot, and from disgruntled economic iconoclasts such as these, the unhappy boniface had little to ex-

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pect but blows had he but the impudent effrontery to even mention a thing so vulgarly disagreeable as a bill of settlement.

Placed in a situation as painful as this, with profits that were meager, to say the least, and when he was in a veritable sweat over some miscreant's account, long overdue, his whole soul yearning to extort what was due him, and more, but restrained from voicing his pessimism and his desires for fear of the consequences, when not a day passed without some brawl which was likely to grow into a riot in which he would be the anvil on which the opposing factions were certain to beat out their mutual spite, his life was filled with colorful adventure. Crucified upon the cross of self-interest, his existence was far from happy, and the golden mien, to him, was worse than a tight-wire in a typhoon.

As the times grew darker and darker, bully swordsmen grew in numbers, and crowded the taverns, and then it was, that, drunk or sober, they all fenced to the same purpose whenever the distracted landlord agitated the question of payment. With the arrival of their crowded hour, they would start a fight, plates and tankards would careen in flat trajectory across the scene of combat; swords would be drawn and the place would resound with the harsh grinding of steel on steel, whilst mine host, lurking fearsome under some table or dark stair, cursed alike, the brawlers and the fates that thrust them upon him, but never in his own temerity and utter lack of tact in failing to await their own good time for settlement.

At last, after a few thrusts and parries, after the

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entire neighborhood had been aroused, the instigators would seek safety in leg bail, and other quarters in which to lodge as well.

Mercutio compares Benvolio to such a fellow as must have been a charter member of the society we are discussing:

"Thou art like one of those fellows that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, clasps me his sword upon the table, and says, 'God send me no need of thee!' and, by operation of the second cup, draws him on the drawer, when, indeed, there is no need."*

Happily, however, there came, now and then, individuals of greater importance, with whom transactions of a business nature were less dangerous and more profitable. In travelling, there were many of this class and, although they greatly preferred a hospitality far different from that offered by the taverns, yet on their arrival in some city or hamlet they sometimes found themselves without friends or acquaintances to whom they could apply. Here necessity took a hand and they were forced into the taverns for food and shelter, and the romances of chivalry contain many passages descriptive of the emergencies in which they found themselves involved. So common was this situation that it passed into the language and the term "*prendre hostel*" came to mean the situation in which some august personage found himself, when compelled to seek shelter at an inn or tavern.

In *Floyre and Blanchefleur*, a very ancient romance, we find a landlord who has already gained a competence by ventures both on land and sea, and

* *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III, Scene I.

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has evidently retired ashore and purchased the "Snug Harbor" in which Floyre, the hero, takes lodgings, while searching for his vanished mistress:

"To a riche city they bothe ycome,
Whaire they have their inn ynome*
At a palais soothe riche:
The lord of their inn has non his liche,
Him fell gold enough to honde,
Bothe in water and in lande,
He hadde yled his life ful wide."

When ready to take his leave, the guest demanded his scot of his host, paid it, and went his way, but in the "Romance of the Violette," it is with the daughter of the boniface that Gerars de Neveres makes settlement. One of the most interesting episodes in the "Romance of Bauduin de Sebourg," another tale of chivalry of the same period as "Violette," takes place in a tavern. In the poem "The King of Jerusalem, the mirror of chivalry comes into the vintner's establishment with his mistress disguised as a squire. Several scenes with which we have no immediate concern are enacted, before the courtly lover takes his departure leaving his horse and arms temporarily in the custody of his host, as by agreement.

* Prendre hostel.

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CHAPTER XII.

It is not my intention to cite for my readers the various characters in the romances of the times, and show them lodged in an inn, unless the establishments were famous in their day. For example, there was an inn which had a bear for a sign. The tavern was known as "Sign of the Bear," and was famous enough in 1377 to be well known. Three centuries later a French savant, editing an annotation "Jehan de Saintre's History and Pleasant Chronicle," in which this old tavern is mentioned, remarks:

"There is yet in that district a very ancient house which still has a bear for its sign."

"Ursins, in his "History of Charles VI," of France, says of Montigny (anon 1406) that "De Montigny rode on horseback down the long Rue aux Febves, and in passing the corner hostelry which had the sign of the Cross of Gold, in which lived a wealthy burgher named Colin du Pont, a very rich and influential man, he saw through the window, three companions of his own rank, under arms."

"From statements such as these, and from much in Froissart, we can see that there were taverns in which the company and entertainment was of the best, but this was by virtue of the classes which patronized them, or because of the reputation of the feudal lord in whose domains they were, and it may be said with truth that generally, such of the nobility and quality as lodged in the taverns were often forced

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to compromise with impudence and even obscenity when they entered the doors. Duels often took place between guests who only wanted to be left alone, and bullying spadassins who took exceptions to their presence or envied them their state. In Weyman's "Gentleman of France," there is an excellent description of this phase of tavern life, and another, though scarcely as vivid, occurs in "Ogier of Denmark." In this instance, Bertran, the hero, encounters a drunken bully at the door of the pothouse. The latter lays violent hands on the knight's reins, jerks the horse backward and harshly demands of the rider who and what he is. If the knight will deliver ten marks with sufficient quickness and humility, dismount, put up horse, arms, armour and clothing, as stakes, and gamble with his captor, he may be permitted to excuse himself for living. The knight orders him savagely to let go his bridle, but the only response is a continual jerking of the bit that tortures the poor horse and frightens it so that in backing, it loses its footing and falls. By good fortune the knight comes to the ground without injury; he is furious, and strikes his drunken tormentor to the ground with his sword.

Sometimes it happened that the upper classes did not stop at being a mere guest of a day, but established closer and more intimate relationships with their hostesses, thus sowing seeds that often sprouted long after the fires of passion had expired, when jealousy had yielded the palm to indifference.

Thus in 1570, a period later than that with which we are concerned, Francois de Vendome, vidame de Chartres had intimate commerce with the daughter

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of a taverner. An infant resulted, and in the last will and testament of his lordship, he took care that neither the child nor its mother were overlooked: "the daughter of the hostess who formerly conducted the inn at Saint Nicholas de Dreux, and the child with which she was was pregnant by act of his."

As we are still upon the subject of august patrons of mediaeval taverns, we may, with some propriety, cross into Germany and witness the transports of a still more illustrious sinner; a glutton who has been compared to the exquisite Trimalchio, in his utter disregard of expenses; I refer to the astounding career of Henry Liegnitz, as Hans de Schweinichen, his appropriately named majordomo, has related it in a veritable odyssey of gluttonising and debauchery, gambling and discriminating wenching.

The tastes of our German nobleman will not permit him to follow the examples of Chartres, and seduce the cabaret entertainers, or put foolish notions into the head of his host's silly daughter, he is better advised. He lodges at the most sumptuous inn, and his hospitality outrivals Wallingford's as the light of the noon-day sun does that of the crescent moon. If there are soft beds to be had, his will be the softest, and the same is true of the wines. Protected by his lofty station and title, which seemed for a long time sufficient security for any expense he chose to incur, he foundered himself with good living and rioted in honors until comes the blessed day, when, well fed and footloose, he silently departs for other worlds to conquer.

And he has found an eloquent biographer in his squire: a knave after his own heart, who has recorded

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in his memoirs, published about twenty years after the episodes they describe, a vivid and pulsating epic of knavery, specious and gorgeous, operating subtly and scientifically on two of the basest principles which govern civilized man: his vanity, and his avarice. How many men or women who invest their capital in wild-cat schemes or ventures closely bordering on the criminal, take their bitter pill in philosophical silence, and console themselves with the sweetly solemn thought that they were even before they started.

Writing under the imposing title "The Loves, Lusts, and Life of the Germans of the Sixteenth Century," Hans, the Falstaff, the Sancho Panza of this northern Don Quixote, proves to an admiring world that, although Liegnitz may easily have found a hundred thousand scoundrels as eminent, he could scarcely have found another squire as specious in all the realm.

His youthful environment, his manner of thought, his inclinations, all combined to make of him an admirable tool for such a wasting wassailer as his master. Tankards and dice were the constant companions of his youth, and to gain a good insight into his character it is only necessary to read carefully a page or two of his journal. There he describes himself for what he is; economical and avaricious, yet prodigal with money; religious, vain, a libertine, and a heavy drinker:

"That year I had the misfortune to lose my mother. God took her, and I will weep for her to the end of my life. The wheat brought two groschen the bushel. My father augmented my allowance of eleven

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thalers. He gave me a fine cloak of black for mourning. Augustine will like me in this. Tomorrow there will be a big reunion at the tavern of the Three Angels, much drinking to do. God grant me grace to live in peace, innocence, and health, amen!"

Thus he shows us the workings of his mind. He is unconsciously preparing himself to fill the difficult situation of minister of finance to a magnificent ducal lecher, the arbiter elegantiarum of his master's pleasures, the topanta of his spectacular wine suppers where the rarest champagnes and the costliest lacrima christi will bow like water. Yet he is a double role; his thirsts and appetites are as insatiable as those of his employer, and he must bridle them; he must provide the money and credit, and another will spend it. Matters came to a crisis while they were honoring Augsburg with their residence.

Liegnitz remained in that city for some time, as the native hospitality of the inhabitants, and the ease with which they could be fleeced, rendered them very acceptable and pleasant to him. His days and nights were passed at the gaming table, and his technique enabled him to correct the errors of chance, with little difficulty, winning in this way three or four hundred ducats. But these huge sums did not suffice. His purse was so constituted that no matter how fast the money rolled in, it disgorged with a rapidity infinitely greater. His debts began to pile up, and the taverner with whom he lodged and who catered for his entertainments and necessities, began to bellow for his money. Other tradesmen heard this pleading voice in the wilderness, the air was catchy, they joined in

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and the anvil chorus soon became so loud that he could hear nothing else.

His paramount need was to quiet the yelping of his creditors at any cost, and he therefore had recourse to that expedient common to adventurers, he commenced to borrow.

For that purpose he addressed himself to Fugger, the greatest banker at Augsburg, the Rothschild of the sixteenth century, whom Rabelais mentions under the name of Fourque.* The old banker who governed the finances of the entire clan refused, but his refusal was very respectful. He pointed out to the nobleman that he was even then pledged to furnish the king of Spain with four thousand ducats on account, and that it was therefore impossible for him to serve his lordship. As an excipient, he invited him to a magnificent banquet. This invitation Legnitz accepted, but he did not stop there. He went at once to the city council and dazzled the members with the possibilities of such a situation, and the splendid bait he held out to them led them to lend him one thousand ducats without interest, and on the sole condition that the sum be repaid within one year. The loan was made without other security than his word of mouth, pure and simple.

The sum thus obtained was very satisfactory, as far as it went, and enabled him to satisfy his landlord. His other creditors could howl to their hearts' content as long as he was assured of a good bed and a fine table for a long time to come, and, strangely enough, from the instant in which they learned of his

* Gargantua Lib. I, Chapter 8.

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improved standing with his host, the weary ceased from troubling and the wicked was at rest.

The thousand ducats enabled him to prolong his pleasant sojourn in the city of his choice, but the hour when payment for this amount and the other sums obtained by various means arrived, and with it, the end of the burghers' patience.

"All of Augsburghers," says Hans, "were ready and anxious to be shorn, and the duke merely did them the honor of shearing them, but his residence in that city, that golden age of the prince and his henchmen, could not endure for long. The burghers found it difficult to deal with one of his lofty station, and costly to furnish the presents necessary and usual; they weighed their money-bags and consulted their treasure chests, and when they found a huge deficit, they reflected upon the inconveniences attendant upon entertaining a ducal sovereign in their midst. They deemed the lesson complete in every respect, came to the conclusion that the honor of defraying the expenses of a noble; feasting him, and entertaining him, was more than they could afford, and decided that the time had come to give the royal black-leg his conge, and kiss him out.

"Then Liegnitz was done for. Whenever he took a seat at a gaming table, those around it dispersed. They refused to challenge his mastery over the laws of chance, as they had learned from past experience how costly his lessons were. Sweinichen knocked in vain at every door; merchants, jews, usurers, brokers, nobles seeking social prestige, honest women, nuns, girls in love with themselves or with each other, chemists, without a single exception,

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he found them all deaf and unresponsive. Each and every one found some good reason to avoid the contribution they intended to levy. Day by day the funds of the two adventurers dwindled, and finally Hans, touched by the distress of the prince, sold the beautiful gold chain given him by his father for the miserable sum of sixty-five ducats.

"They left Augsburg and went to Cologne. The duke's purse was empty, but no sooner had he arrived than he invited the whole town to dinner, gave a great entertainment, and within eight hours of his entry into the city, he owed his landlord five hundred ducats.

" 'The evil that men do lives after them,' and the taverner was not long in learning enough of his royal guest's antecedents to render him peevish and difficult. He loudly demanded that his scot be paid, but without success. By the use of diplomacy, Hans succeeded in obtaining a brief respite, but the delay of five days expired and the boniface became more menacing than before. What could be done? What solution could be found for a situation so dangerous and difficult? The duke had succeeded so well with the council at Augsburg that he resolved on attempting the same experiment with the city fathers at Cologne, and Hans received full powers to treat with the citizens. He asked for a mere pittance of ten thousand ducats, for a period of two years, with any interest suitable to them. Hans presented himself before the dignified assembly which received him with all the honors of a plenipotentiary. It heard him in patience, although it had already resolved that there would be no loan for any sum. When his

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eloquent oration was finished, they rose as a man and voted unanimously to accord the orator a guard of honor as an escort to his lodgings, and in the meantime, the conclave would deliberate upon the response which should be given to the noble duke.

"Three days later, the deputation of the burghers waited upon Hans with their written response, and the reply was as lengthy, as verbose, as respectfully hypocritical as the address of the ambassador had been adroit and diffuse.

"The brilliant eloquence of Hans is worthy of admiration, and equally so the duke and his ancestors. But it was impossible for the city to lend money to great lords, and it could only content itself by offering his highness the sum of two hundred ducats, not as a loan but as a gift.

"His baseness permitted him to accept their humiliating offer."

Nor is it necessary to add that the duke, already five hundred ducats in arrears with his landlord for the sumptuous entertainment he had given at his lordship's orders, having but the two hundred ducats they had tossed him, departed for more congenial climes without paying anything.

It is safe to say that the sum of five hundred ducats, lavished with discrimination in the centuries that preceded, would have procured an abundance of luxury on a magnificent scale in the more pretentious taverns of the age of Froissard, and we need manifest no astonishment at his frequentation of them, or of that of Sir Thomas Percy, and the other ambassadors of the English king, when they were sent hur-

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riedly to Paris to treat of peace between the two realms.

Froissard tells us that during the brief period of his stay at Lestines, the taverners got five hundred francs of his money, but as he was a lover of good cheer all his life, he did not regret the expenditure. His estimate of the inns of his times is singularly favorable, but it should be remembered that he was a person of consequence wherever he went, and crowned heads and powerful nobles were directly interested in his success as a writer of history. Where he was concerned, the taverner would of necessity put his best foot foremost and do everything in his power to render his lodgings commodious and elegant.

In an illuminating passage* he informs us that "part of the king of England's cabinet-council were sent in handsome state to wait on the king of France at Paris. The English knights dismounted at the sign of the Chateau de Festu, in the street of La Croix du Tiroir, where they had fixed their lodgings."

This is the same tavern that we find mentioned in Rabelais.**

"To be brief, when we were returned, he (Panurge) brought me to drink at the Chateau de Festu, and there showed me ten or twelve of his little bags full of money."

But the tavern experiences of Froissard are by no means confined to Paris alone, he travelled in Italy, France, England, Scotland, and the Low Countries, and described with realism everything he saw.

* Lib. IV, Chap. 25.

** Pantagruel, Lib. II, Chap. 17.

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In 1388, he determined to visit the Count de Foix, in order to get information on distant provinces and the wars waged there. On his way he had the good fortune to meet Sir Espaign du Lyon, a knight from the country of Foix, who was returning home. They rode together and exchanged information, and, after a journey of several days, arrived at Ortez, the ordinary residence of the Count de Foix.

In the course of their journey together, the elder knight relates much of the local history which Froissard eagerly drinks in and reduces to writing at the end of each day. Thus, in telling the story of a hardy miscreant named Mengeant, he says:

"He set out from Lourdes with twenty-nine others, and rode. . . . seeking adventures. His wishes were to surprise the Castle of Penne, which he was nearly doing, but failed."

After a spirited engagement, Le Mengeant was captured, and was saved from the populace only with the greatset difficulty, to carry out a delightful masquerade and abduction:

"One time he set out with orders, without arms, disguised as an abbot attended by four monks; for he and his companions had shaven the crowns of their heads, and no one who saw them would have imagined but that they were real monks, for they had every appearance in dress and look. In this manner he came to Montpellier, and alighted at the inn of the Angel, saying he was an abbot from upper Gascony going to Paris on business.

"He made acquaintance with a rich man at Montpellier, called Sir Beranger, who was likewise bound for Paris on his affairs. On the abbot telling

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him he would carry him thither free from all expense, he was delighted that the journey would cost him nothing, and set out with Le Mengeant attended only by a servant. They had left Montpelier three leagues when Le Mengeant made him his prisoner and conducted him through crooked and bye-roads to his garrison at Loudre, whence he afterwards ransomed him for five thousand francs.”*

They continued their journey, crossed the Garonne to Casseres, in a small boat in which there was room for two horses and little else, supped there, and strolled around the walls. After an entertaining lecture on matters of local history, they continued their journey and came at last to the town of Tournay, where lodgings had been taken.

“We were comfortably lodged at the inn of the Star. When supper was served, the Governor of Malvoisin, Sir Raymond de Lane, came to see us, and supped with us: he brought with him four flagons of excellent wine, as good as any I drank on the road. These two knights conversed long together, and it was late when Sir Raymond departed and returned to his castle at Malvoisin.”**

At Tarbes, they also lodged at the Star tavern.

“And we soon after entered Tarbes, where we were very comfortable at the hotel of the Star. We remained there the whole of that day, for it was a commodious place to refresh ourselves and horses, having good hay, good oats, and a handsome river.”***

After a delightful pourney through the lowlands

* Lib. III, Chap. 4 and finem.

** Lib. III, 6.

*** Lib. III, 7.

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and meadows, they finally arrived at Orthes, just at sunset.

"The knight dismounted at his own house; and I did the same at the hotel of the Moon, kept by a squire of the count, who received me with much pleasure on account of my being a Frenchman."*

During his residence at the Moon tavern, he witnessed the arrival of a very celebrated character, the Bastard of Mauleon.**

"He arrived at the hotel of the Moon, where I lodged, in grand array, having led horses with him like to a great baron, and he and his attendants were served on plate of gold and silver."***

It was an invariable custom with the Count de Foix, to rise at noon and sup at midnight, and Froissard, after a pleasant evening at his tavern, gives us an excellent picture of the breakup of the party to go to supper with the nobleman.

"The watch of the castle had sounded his horn, to assemble those in the town of Orthes, who were engaged to sup with the Count de Foix. The two squires then made themselves ready and, having lighted torches, we left the inn together, taking the road to the castle, as did all the knights and squires who lodged in the town."****

It is with regret that we read of the death of this great and brilliant exponent of personal rights, who defended his interests against the machinations of feudal baron and sovereign alike, cruel, implacable, yet tender where the under dog's rights were involved. As is usual with him, Froissard has given a

* Lib. III, 9.
.. Lib. III, 10.
... Lib. III, 10.
**** Lib. III, Chap. 10.

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graphic account which we reproduce because it occurred in a tavern.

"In this year died likewise suddenly, the noble and gallant Count de Foix, the ancestor of the rulers of Navarre. How it came to pass I will relate. True it is that of all the pleasures in this world, he took the most delight in the chase, and was always well provided with hounds of all sorts, having never less than sixteen hundred. The Count de Foix was at this season hunting in the forests of Sauveterre, on the road to Pampeluna in Navarre, not far distant from Orthes, in Bearne. The day he died, he had all the forenoon been hunting a bear, and it was late in the evening when the prey was taken and cut up. His attendants asked where he pleased to have his dinner prepared: he said, 'at the inn of Rion, where we will dine, and, in the cool of the evening ride to Orthes.'

"His orders were obeyed. The count with his companions rode a foot's pace towards the villgae of Rion, and dismounted at the inn. The count went to his chamber, which he found ready strewed with rushes and green leaves; the walls were hung with boughs newly cut for perfume and coolness, as the weather was marvellously hot, even for the month of August.

"He had no sooner entered his room than he said:

" 'These greens are very agreeable to me, for the day has been desperately hot.'

"When seated, he conversed with Sir Espaign du Lyon on the dogs that had best hunted; during which conversation, his bastard son Sir Evan and

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Sir Peter Cabeston entered the apartment, as the table had been spread there.

"He called for water to wash, and two squires advanced; Raymonet de Lasne, and Raymonet de Copane: Ernaudon d'Espaign took the silver basin, and another knight, called Sir Thibaut, the napkin. The count rose from his seat, and stretched out his hands to wash; but no sooner had his fingers, which were handsome and long, touched the cold water, than he changed color, from an oppression at his heart and, his legs failing him, fell back on his seat, exclaiming: 'I am a dead man: Lord have mercy on me.'

"He never spoke after this, though he did not die immediately, but suffered great pain. The knights present and his son were greatly terrified: they carried him gently in their arms to another chamber, and laid him on a bed, covering him well, thinking he was only chilled.

"The two squires who had brought the water to wash in the basin said, to free themselves from any charge of having poisoned him:

" 'Here is the water: we have already drunk it, and will do so again in your presence,' which they did to the satisfaction of all. They put into his mouth bread, water, spices, and other comfortable things, but to no purpose, for he was dead in less than half an hour, having surrendered his soul very quietly. Out of his grace, God was merciful to him.'*

There is one factor in connection with Froissards' entry into Orthes, which is of interest. He has told us that he lodged at an inn maintained by a

* Lib. V, Chap. 28.

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retainer of the Count de Foix, the feudal lord of the manor, and we may assure ourselves that this was the universal custom. The lord of the manor almost always had more than a passing interest in the inns within his sphere of influence, not because of the profits that accrued therefrom, but because he could better control espionage by this means, and whether the land be that of France, Italy, Spain or sunny Portugal, the situation was the same. I do not include in this list of pretentious inns the miserable *ventas* and *posadas* of the two peninsulas, lowly hovels and filthy, in which the charcoal burner procured his *olla podrida*, nor the slightly more pretentious establishments such as that in which Sancho Pansa had his immortal initiation into the possibilities of ascending to heaven via the blanket route, or that in which the good Don Quixote, in imitation of Lucius in Apuleius, slew all the wine skins in the patio, but of the finer feudal reliques, subject to the stricter code of the *hijos dalgos*, or, in our more modern parlance, *hidalgos*.

Under the date of 1530, Diego de Ordas, lieutenant of Cortes, petitions the Spanish crown to prevent the local municipal officials from seizing the produce of his fields and diverting the same from his *posadas* to the local treasuries, in lieu of taxes during his absence in Mexico in behalf of the crown.

His aristocratic recommendation that the tax gatherers of the municipality be scourged, is in entire keeping with the best Spanish thought upon the subject.*

In the ages that preceded the renaissance, the

* Manuscript from the Collection of Oliver Barrett, of Chicago.

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internal condition of chaos and brigandage in the peninsula were, of course, reflected in the wayside taverns, and the principle cause of the high prices charged for wines was to be traced to the disorder that reigned in the inns, according to an excellent little work published in 1765. The luscious products of Andalusia and Jerez de la Frontera, the heady brandies of the house of Domecq, could not be exported in the face of conditions such as these: the monasteries then, as at present, brewed their own beverages, and commerce was at a standstill. The natural ruggedness of the country forbade sufficient supplies of forage, and this was no mean impediment to such commerce and internal trade as there was. At some places along the roads there were meadows where pack animals could graze, and the great landowner generally established a henchman in a tavern, and thus found a market for the produce of his lands even as had his Roman predecessor. The establishments found in Grenada and within the sphere of Moorish influence were like those to be found in the arid reaches from which the conquerors had come. In the centuries of their occupation, their tastes naturally underwent some changes as the barbarians came into contact with the remnants of Roman civilization which had survived the inundation of the Goths. Their standards of living were gradually improved and their native genius was made manifest in their architecture and landscape gardening, remains of which are still to be seen on the lovely terraces of the Guadalquivir below Seville, but in matters pertaining to the needs of travellers, they remained stationary, and, with few exceptions, the inns

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in southern Spain between the eighth and fifteenth centuries had little to recommend them. As they were poor, their annals are short.

Among the Lusitanians, however, the inns and taverns were in better odor, and Gil Vicente, an old Portuguese poet, had ventured to compare the tavern to the church. This he could scarcely have ventured to do, even though due allowance is made for the greater freedom of that age, if the establishments were as foul as other taverns of other countries of the period.

The inns, in the opinion of the poet, are as necessary to the weary voyagers here below, in their journeyings to and fro, to give them temporal shelter and permit them to recuperate and rest from fatigue, as are the churches in the soul's pilgrimage to eternity.

The etherial palmer, under escort of an angel came to a hospitable inn, which is in reality the church, and is served and ministered to by four saints, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome and Thomas. The conversation between the soul and its conductor is interesting to a degree. The devil joins the procession and does his best to seduce the souls from their allegiance. He loads his intended victims with heavy luxuries and magnificent habits which impede the march and contribute to fatigue. The soul is on the verge of seceding and taking the easier road when the angel comes to the rescue. After some debate, the shade decides to persevere and they arrive at last at an inn, completely exhausted with their hardships.

The good and wise admonitions which the saints

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bestow, and a spiritual repast, symbolical of the eucharist, repair the ravages of suffering and deprivation. The victim is no longer the victim but the victor; the gaudy tinsel is tossed contemptuously aside, and full of sincere humility and contrition, they resume their way. The tempter has lost his chance.

What a difference there is between this pious comparison of the church, the asylum of the sinner, and the inn, the refuge and stay of the traveller, and the bitter and singular picture drawn by d'Assoucy, in which seventeenth century taverns are compared with Olympus itself.

The old poet is serious and devout, the French cynic is satiric almost to nausea, and the two will be shown side by side for the purpose of contrasting the tavern life of the Peninsula of the fifteenth century with that of France in the seventeenth; miserable inns but honest people, on the one hand, and sumptuous bodegas and vice rampant on the other.

We will give the substance of Labitte's estimate of d'Assoucy.

His purpose was to satirize superstition and in doing this, to make the gods fit into their proper spheres and callings in ordinary life. His Olympus reeks with the rank odor of boiling cabbage. His characters wear wooden shoes which are not mates, and the goddesses go clacking across the floor, in an ungainly shuffle. Gone are the gold embroidered buskins, the scolding and jealous Juno, with her arms akimbo, brawls like any herring woman among her rivals. When Hebe prepares the celestial table, a porringer full of peas and bacon is seen in her hands,

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in place of the cup of ambrosia. Jupiter makes the world tremble, but it is because he is bowling.

Bacchus, whose chariot is conventionally drawn by tigers, who advances amongst a throng of lovely dancers, wearing a crown of vine leaves and tendrils, from which hang golden and purple grapes, is here represented as short and squat, very drunk, square shouldered and pimple faced, riding on horseback with his cask in his arms.

Apollo appears eating brown bread, and his harp has disappeared; in its place, he sports a pair of rattle-bones.

Pluto says the blessing at table; and it may be confidently said that in all this mythological allegory, in which the loftiest ideals of a vanished race have been prostituted to a level with the most degraded tavern practice, the satirist has produced a tableau that is revolting alike to christian and pagan.

The broad minded reader may well deplore this satiric poet's penchant for dragging beauty in the mire, and the grace muttered by Pluto is but an added touch that shows the reaction of a mind free to express itself after a thousand years of enforced silence; an interminable period in which blasphemy could be committed by a glance of the eye, and rewarded on the theory that it is better to roast here than hereafter.

Amongst the many miracle plays of the times there were many that were guilty of prophane anachronism; we have already spoken of the Prodigal Son, and the part he played in the riotous life of the Middle Ages, and the writer of farces did not fail to take other characters from the testaments and imbue

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them with evil. The miracle of Cana was enacted in many a tavern, and there is a farce of the fourteenth century in which the God of Israel is represented as a good bishop with a long beard, a beautiful golden mitre, a ring on his finger, and a red cap on his head, while Satan appears in the role of a drunken roisterer whose last debauch has left him a hang-over that only plenty of water and a good bed can cure.

In another play by Maillard, we see Joseph and Mary at Bethlehem; the poor couple, with their donkey, and meager baggage go wearily from inn to inn, applying for lodgings, while the keepers, after examining their miserable luggage, deny them shelter for fear they cannot pay their scot.

Nor were these bonifaces any different from those of Paris, in the times of the author who meant to satirize them for their sycophantic adulation of wealth and ostentation; they outvied one another to entertain the great merchants, but the poor devils, no matter how worthy, merited not even a bone such as would be tossed to the dogs.

The palmers and other pilgrims often lodged at the inns, when they could not gain access to the monasteries, but many amongst them gave preference to the license and lack of restraint found in the taverns, and accordingly patronized them by preference, making some disreputable pothouse the base of operation from which to start upon a pious pilgrimage.

During the epoch of the Norman invasion a band of young pirates wishing to capture the fleet of their enemies by a ruse, adopted the disguise of palmers, and applied for food and shelter to a miller who con-

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ducted a sort of tavern on the Seine. This miller was also purveyor of fish to the commander of the fleet, and it was part of his duties to act as watchman.

The episode is curious and we shall give it extenso, as it appears in Richer's chronicle*

"The duke (Hugues), foreseeing an attack by the Normans, had ordered all vessels within twenty miles brought and stationed at the place where the enemy was expected to make his irruption, in order that he might prevent their passage and cut off their communications; but his design miscarried when they did not attack where they were expected. Ten young men who had devoted themselves to destiny, changed their military costumes to the habiliments of travellers, and, pretending to be palmers engaged in a pilgrimage, they took the road with baskets on their shoulders and staffs in their hands. Owing to their false habits, they succeeded in passing through the city of Paris and crossing the Seine without arousing any suspicion. They gained the further bank where the vessels of the fleet were lying, and took up lodgings at the tavern of a miller, whom they told that they had come from the other side for the purpose of visiting the tombs of the saints.

"The miller, seeing that they were fine young men, and that they were also wearing a garb well known and highly respected, accorded them a gracious hospitality, and looked after them with care.

"They, meditating upon their strategem, paying for their wine with good money, succeeded in getting their host drunk, and for this purpose they passed

* Lib. II, Chap. 57.

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an entire day in eating and drinking. When the wine had sufficiently mellowed their landlord, they asked him what was his calling, to which he made answer that he was a miller. They interrogated him further and learned that he was fisherman-in-chief to the duke, and that he was well paid also from the boats he hired out.

"Thereupon, they desired him to set them down on the opposite bank, as the way was long and they were very weary, promising him ten louis for this little service.

"The miller answered them that by edict of the duke all the boats had been moored in the river, to deprive the Germans, who were on the march, of the means of effecting a crossing. They assured him that the thing could be done under cover of darkness without any blame attaching to him, as no one would know. The host, like all his tribe, was extremely anxious to lay hands on their money, he received the gold, and plighted his faith to see the thing through. Night came and his guests exacted the fulfillment of his contract, and the host, taking his baby son with him, advanced through the darkness towards the vessels, with two of the young men.

"The others surrounded him, and, not wishing to be impeded by an infant, they seized it and threw it into the river. The host attempted to make an outcry but they took him by the throat and threatened him with death unless he carried out their orders and enabled them to gain possession of the boats. Thoroughly frightened, the miller obeyed them in every particular, and they concerted their plans as follows: they put their host in a skiff and tied him;

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then each of them rowed a boat to the other bank. Arrived there, they lifted the miller ashore, still trussed up and helpless, and both embarked for the other side, rejoined their companions, and brought away nine more boats. They crossed the river eight times, in this manner, and got away with seventy-two vessels in all."

Thus did a taverner play an important part in the history of his country; a little wine, the musical clinking of ten golden louis, and the plans of an entire campaign are discounted and set at naught. In the long history of the calling, I have been able to point out but three bonifaces who were above suspicion; he to whom the good Samaritan applied for shelter on behalf of his charge, he who aided the cause of Betran Du Guesclin, and he who figured in one of the episodes of the *Gesta Romanorum*. As the tale is, in all probability, the source from which Shakespeare took his episode of the three caskets, in the *Merchant of Venice*, it is all the more interesting.

"A certain carpenter residing in a city near the sea, very covetous and very wicked, collected a large sum of money, and secreted it in the trunk of a tree, which he placed by his fireside, that no one might have any suspicion that it held money. It happened once that, while all his household slept, the sea overflowed its boundaries, broke down that side of the building where the log was situated, and carried it away.

"It floated many miles, and reached, at length, a city in which there lived a person who kept a public house. Arising early in the morning, he perceived the trunk of the tree in the water, and brought it to

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land, thinking it was nothing but a bit of timber thrown away by some one. He was a liberal, kind-hearted man, and a great benefactor to the poor. It one day chanced that he entertained some pilgrims in his house; and the weather being extremely cold, he cut up the log for firewood. When he had struck two or three blows with the axe he heard a clinking sound; and cleaving it in twain, the gold pieces rolled out in every direction. Greatly rejoiced at the discovery, he deposited them in a secure place, until he should ascertain who was the owner.

"Now the carpenter, bitterly lamenting the loss of his money, travelled from place to place in pursuit of it. He came by accident to the house of the hospitable boniface, who had salvaged the trunk. He failed not to mention the object of his search; and the host, understanding that the money was his, said to himself, 'I will prove, if God will, that the money should be returned to him.' Accordingly, he made three cakes, the first of which he filled with earth; the second with bones of dead men; and in the third he put a quantity of the gold which he had discovered in the trunk.

"'Friend,' said he, addressing the carpenter, 'we will eat three cakes composed of the best meat in the house. Choose which you will have.' The carpenter did as he was directed; he took the cakes and weighed them in his hand, one after another, and finding that with the earth weighed heaviest, he chose it. 'And if I want more, my worthy host,' added he, 'I will have that,' and he laid his hand upon that containing the bones. 'You may keep the third for yourself.'

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“‘I see clearly,’ murmured the host, ‘I see very clearly that God does not will the money to be restored to this wretched man.’ Calling, therefore, the poor and infirm, the blind and the lame, and opening the cake of gold, in the presence of the carpenter, to whom he spoke:

“‘Thou miserable varlet, this is thine own gold, but thou gavest preference to the cakes of earth and dead men’s bones. I am persuaded, therefore, that God wills not that I return thee thy money;’ and so, without delay, he distributed the whole amount amongst the paupers, and drove the carpenter away in great tribulation.”*

Here indeed is an innkeeper after our own heart! and the scabbiest palmer of the breed could safely have lodged in his house without danger of having his piety sullied.

* *Gesta Romanorum*, Tale 119.

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CHAPTER XIII.

We have devoted our time, heretofore, principally to the inns and taverns of the continent. We shall now cross the channel and see what the fair land of England has to offer.

No character in all the crude life of the times is better known than the alewife.

The art of brewing was probably first discovered by the lowly serfs of prehistoric Egypt, but it remained for the people of the Low Countries to develop it until the malt liquors were able to find favor amongst the wealthy.

During the Roman occupation of Albion, the drink was wine, and there were taverns at Chester, Londinum, and Eboracum, or York, to say nothing of the various sutler's booths attached to the commissariats of the legions. The years between the Roman withdrawal and the invasion of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes represent a period of upheaval, with the peoples constantly perturbed by marauding expeditions from the north, with no steel clad Romans to intervene. At their invitation, the Teutonic barbarians landed on their shores and drove the Scottish hordes back into their own dreary habitats. The country was pleasant and the new arrivals promptly proceeded to colonize what they had protected.

These barbarians had long been familiar with

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the processes of brewing, and though they drank wine with avidity, their national tippie was beer.

Because there was little internal trade in Saxon England, there were few taverns. There were, however, many alehouses, and it was but natural that this should be the case. Monasteries were generally located at a distance from the roads, there was not sufficient custom to warrant keeping inns, as Saxon hospitality was opposed to the practise, and some way had to be found to meet the needs of wayfarers. As beer was in demand, rude shelters, often mere roofs supported by uprights, began to make their appearance at the cross-roads and along the bye-ways in the more thickly settled centers. These establishments were called alehouses, and were presided over by women who were often on the wrong side of fifty. They brewed their own product and sold it retail to all comers. Such places were distinguished by a long pole which projected outwards above the door. A broom or brush was attached to the outer end of this pole, and thus we see the sign of the alehouse of the Middle Ages.

I regret that I am not sufficiently grounded in the theories of Higgins and Forlong to point out the phallic symbolism in this sign, but I have no doubt that it can be traced, and certainly the character of the ale-wife, as delineated by Langland, and especially by Skelton, is always in keeping with the emblem, whatever its symbolism.

It was at one of these ale-houses that Chaucer and his fellow pilgrims dismounted, on their way to Canterbury, to rest themselves and their beasts, and the pardoner, who could not abide abstinence,

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when it interfered with his habits, would not begin his tale without a little refreshment:

"Thou bel amy, thou pardoner," he seyde,

"Tel us som mirthe or Iapes right anon."

"It shall be doon," quod he, "by seint Ronyon!

"But first," quod he, "heer at thi sale-stake

I wol both drynke and byten on a cake."

Langland's vivid and well-known description of the tavern of his times has already been quoted, and as a contrast, before dealing with Chaucer's subtle realism, we will look into Skelton, who wrote about a century and a half after Langland and Chaucer. We shall then see that, notwithstanding the Renaissance and the radical changes in thought which grew out of it, the taverns and ale-houses were still the same.

Skelton's ale-wife, Elynour Rummyng, is an old trot, a veritable witch of Endor, who might have been twin sister to the Oenothea of the Satyricon, or to those whom Shakespeare had in mind when he wrote of the horrible crones who were to welcome Macbeth on Lambert heath: "secret, black and midnight hags."

She brews her own ale, nor is too much of her time taken with matters pertaining to cleanliness; and, as the fowls roost above the vats, the ingredients of her brew must have been less ambiguous than those in Bishop Talbot's dish of hash, in his early days in Wyoming. Her eyes are probably pouched, while the lower lids are reddened and droop in a manner that shows the bitter pessimism without fail-

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ing to arouse a like sentiment in discriminating customers, though she has few of the latter.

“For her vysage
It would aswage
A mannes courage.”*

Her features and expression reflect the company that frequents her pothouse:

“Woundersly wrynkled,
Lyke a rost pygges eare,
Brystled wyth here.”

and her nose would seem to merit all the attention it gets:

“Her nose somdele hoked,
And camously croked,
Never stoppynge,
But ever droppynge;
Her skynne lose and slacke,
Grained lyke a sacke;
With a croked backe.”

Her ale-shack is the lode-stone that draws all the leprous rustics in the vicinity of Leatherhed, in Surrey.

“She breweth nopy ale,
And maketh therof port sale
To travellars, to tynkers,
To sweters, to swynkers,
And all good ale drynkers.”

She had chosen her site on the side of a hill near the highroad, manifesting in this way a shocking lack of fact as many of her customers had no desire

* Elynour Rummyug passim.

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whatever to be seen either in her house or in her company:

“Some go streyght thyder,
Be it slaty or slyder;
They holde the hye waye,
They care not what men say,
Be that as be may;
Some, lothe to be espyde,
Start in at the back syde,
Over the hedge and pale,
All for the good ale.”

Her following amongst her own sex reminds one strongly of some of the female characters of Fielding, notably of that of Mrs. Partridge, or of the gin-soaked crone so admirably caricatured by Jepson, in Pollyooly:

“Some wenches come unlased,
Some huswyues come unbrased,
With theyr naked pappes,
That flyppes and flappes;
It wygges and it wagges,
Lyke tawny saffron bagges.”

Far be it from to to put any ammunition in the hands of zealous fanatics, but the passages which follow have much that they might fasten upon. The economic situation in those times was much more difficult than it is today. True it is that money had a greater purchasing power then than at present, but it also follows as a necessary corollary, that if the purchasing power was as fifteen to one, the difficulty of obtaining the medium of exchange was as one hundred to one.

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Financial collapse is generally accompanied by intensive gnawing of all the appetites, and the fact that a man may be penniless is not evidence that he does not crave a tankard of corny ale. Our ale-wife was well aware of this, and based much of her business upon this human weakness:

“Instede of coyne and monny,
Some brynge her a conny,
And some a pot with honny,
Some a salt, and some a spone,
Some their hose, some theyr shone.”

Then, as in the days of Jack Sheppard, the women sometimes disrupted the household by their love for ale or for gin-an-beer. It was often difficult for them to make a settlement, but they left nothing undone which would preserve their good standing with the ale-wife. Much tribulation must have fallen on their devoted heads when their husbands came to discover the nature of the pledges which passed into the hands of the hostess:

Anone cometh another,
As drye as the other,
And wyth her doth brynge
Mele, salte, or other thyng,
Her harvest gyrdle, her weddyng rynge,
To pay for her scot
As cometh to her lot.
Som bryngeth her husbandes hood,
Because the ale is good;
Another brought her his cap
To offer to the ale tap.”

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Were we to push our investigations through to the times of Dickens we would find little improvement in conditions. The female tipplers are a harder-boiled breed, however as ale no longer gives them sufficient kick; they must have their beer with a generous spike of gin. The writer remembers more than one charwoman in the right little tight little island who was a positive adept in working the miracles of Cana, . . . with reverse English.

Skelton, of course, was guilty of some exaggeration in this colorful and malodorous scene he preserved, but the chickens and the pigs had the run of the place right enough, and the educated palate would thrive better on Allsops or Burton-on-Trent.

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CHAPTER XIV.

So much for the ale-houses and the rabble which frequented them. It is not to them that we must look for the real tavern life of the times. They were not the ancestors of the Mermaid, nor of the Boar's Head, that admirable establishment conducted by Mrs. Quickly, where the most famous of all tavern frequenters passed away.

It is to the Tabard, the Garter, the Pine Cone, the Blue Boar, the Salmon, and the like that we must look if we are to understand the age of Jonson and Shakespeare, Marlowe and Cervantes. When coffee was introduced into Western Europe, the fine old taverns went into a brief eclipse during the age of Addison and Steele, but when we reach the period of Dr. Johnson and Joshua Reynolds, the fad had lost its savor and the tavern has come again into its own.

We have spoken of the mania for pilgrimages which commenced to rage shortly after the first crusade, and which caused thousands to undertake long and arduous journeys, staff in hand, to the various shrines of Christendom, even as the moslems made their annual hadi to Mecca, and still make it. Chaucer availed himself of this usage to bring together the various characters representative of the civilization and superstition of his day, and marshalled them into a devout group at the Tabard Inn, at Southwark, and conducted them to the shrine of Thomas a Becket, at Canterbury.

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In effect, the *Canterbury Tales* are but a sort of *Decameron*, related under different circumstances, it is true, but every whit as interesting as the cento of Boccaccio and, from the standpoint of English manners and local coloring, infinitely more valuable than the fine work of the Italian author.

The chivalry of the age is represented by a knight, a squire, and a yeoman; the church by a monk, a friar, a pardoner, a prioress, and nuns; the middle classes by representatives of the trades and professions. There are twenty-nine characters in all, and the society of the times could almost be reconstructed from an analysis of the prologue and text of the tales themselves. Our author, he was a small, rolly-polly man with a keen face and with an elfin propensity to humor, with a homely wit, often rude but always sparkling; can, with a few light touches depict his characters and bring them out with such fidelity that later ages can visualize them even without the help afforded by the Ellesmere manuscript. He is master of a satire that is searching but not too cruel, and of a faculty of observation that extends even to the processes of thought of all humanity, whether of high degree or low. Such are the qualities in which the father of English poetry excells.

That he was of the Middle Ages is true, and his mind was obfuscated by the mist through which all mediaeval writers looked on life; but in his case, he saw further than most of his contemporaries, and such highly polished rogues as pardoners, hedge-priests, quack doctors, and the like, were as easily pierced by his Lycean vision as glass.

The Tabard Inn, chosen by Chaucer as his start-

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ing place, is situated at Southwark, in his times a suburb, but one which was long since included in the immense area of London itself. The very name is unusual, as the common sign of the inn of the times was a Crown, or Crossed Keys. This tavern was commodious and well managed, and there was room for man and beast. Our author had even then embarked upon his devout journey and was lodged at the inn, when the others, twenty-nine in all, arrived. It was at the end of April, when the air in Kent is soft and fragrant, and when spring fever, which played no unimportant part in bringing about these pilgrimages, had laid hold of him. Before the evening he had cultivated the acquaintance of every arrival and made himself one of their company. With the true instinct of the writer, he catalogues and describes every character, weighs it in the balance of his judgment, and weaves it into a finished portrait that defies improvement. It was the age of chivalry, and he starts with the knight.

His horses were good but he was not gaily dressed. His fustian doublet still bore the marks of his habergeon, as he had just returned from the wars and was even then performing his vow which had been made for his safe arrival. He was mild mannered, and brave, and had often sat at the head of the table. His code of living made him, as the author says, "a verray parfit gentil knight," who saw no evil, heard no evil and spoke no evil.

His squire is his son, a young man of twenty, fine of figure, buoyant with life, who slept no more at night than any nightingale. His short gown had sleeves that were long and wide, and his doublet

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was embroidered with red and white flowers like a meadow. He sang or played the flute all day long.

In the service of the knight and his son was a hardy English yeoman; clad in coat and hood of green, and under his belt he bore a sheaf of peacock arrows bright and keen, nor did the feathers droop, and in his hand he had a mighty bow. His head was closely cropped, and his face tanned. He was armed with sword, buckler and dagger, and on his breast gleamed a silver likeness of Saint Christopher. This vivid passage brings to mind Sir Walter Scott's description of Robin Hood, in *Ivanhoe*.

We are now introduced to a character whom we would never have expected to find in such a place, on the continent. The prioress, modest and plump, whose name, Eglantine, stands for the flower most in favor in the cloister. She is smiling and coy, and so delicate in her eating that never a morsel of food drops from her lips, nor does she dip her fingers into the sauce nor get a single drop of it upon her clothing. She would weep if she saw a mouse caught in a trap, and she had several dogs which she fed with scraps of roast meat. If some wretch cuffed one of her pets she took it much to heart. Her nose was well shaped, her eyes gray, her mouth small and red. Her cloak was beautifully made, and her clothes were elegant in the extreme. From her arm was suspended a string of coral beads with the garnitures in silver and from this hung a brooch of polished gold on which was graven an A, and these words. . . . *Amor vincit omnia*.

There was also a monk; a manly man, given to hunting and riding, worthy in all respects to be an

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abbot. His stable was full of fine blooded mounts, and when he rode the little round bells on his bridle jingled as loudly as the carillons in the church which he presided over. No lover of the past was he, his thoughts were all on the present, and what the future held could wait its turn. He paid scant heed to that text that asserted that hunters could no more pass for holy men, and which likened a monk without a cloister to a fish out of water. He was bald and his head glistened as did his round face, like both had been annointed with oil. Full blooded and burning with the zest of life, his favorite dish was roasted swan.

So much for the splendid ecclesiastic, but the friar is a far better type:

He was a begging friar, lively and pleasant, who had, at his own expense married many young women well. True, they will all have been concubines of his, who have begun to hang heavily on his hands. He is a real pillar in his order. Loved by all, he is on terms of familiarity with every franklin in his district, and with all the women in the villages as well. He is empowered to confess their sins, just as a cure, and he hears of their peccadilloes with indulgent complaisance, and gives them absolution in a manner agreeable to their vanity. When it comes to the matter of pennances, he is a genius in inflicting those which are appropriate to the sinner and the best interests of the order. His loose hood was filled with little knives and trinkets for the various women he met; which is evidence of the decay into which his order was falling, as the itinerant friars gradually

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usurped the offices of peddlar and huckster before they were finally suppressed.

He loved to sing and spin yarns, and he knew every bar-maid in the province.

“Of yeddinges he bar utterly the prys.
His nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys;
Ther-to he strong was as a champion.
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet than a lazar or a beggestere.”

He had taking ways, as many a widow found to her cost, and he never departed without a farthing. He listed to make his English sweet upon his tongue, and when he sang or played the harp his eyes glittered like the stars on a frosty night.

When the churchmen foregathered at the taverns there was sure to be a great party, with plenty of the best to eat and drink. The best beds were hastily made for the guests and their varlets, and even their horses and mules were seen to with care.

This was no less true of France and Italy than of England. The innkeeper was polite to the ecclesiastics and served them gladly, but he was especially servile when the prelate was sheltered in his house, and invariably saluted him with the title befitting his dignity, bowing and scraping the while. Only a Frenchman could have gotten the most out of the ambiguous bestowal of a high-sounding title such as *Monsieur*, on some gulligut glutton of whom there were then so many, and one episode in the “*Contes d’Eutrapel*,”* shows how abuses could arise from the custom.

* Tale the Seventeenth.



A Dining Hall

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It seems that seven or eight gluttons, men-about-town, who belonged to the army of hard-up financiers, conceived the idea of playing upon this weakness of humanity for adulation. They got together for the purpose of duping a foolish innkeeper, as well as the poor devil whom they had chosen as the instrument of their design.

They found a miserable beggar, fat and extremely homely, to whom they promised wonderful things if only he would say "ita, ita," and nothing more, and promising him that he would be called Monsieur, and treated as a lord and not rudely as was his wont.

The dolt signified his willingness, and was carefully instructed in matters of conduct, after which he was accoutered in habiliments cut and fashioned by that demoiselle Picoree, of whom we have spoken before, mounted upon an old sumpter mule, and started with his train of courtiers to refresh himself in the nearest tavern. Arrived there, he was received by the host with every mark of reverence; he dismounted and was conducted with veneration to the finest chamber in the establishment. To forestall the host's curiosity, they informed him that his guest was a great and wealthy prelate who did not wish his identity known because of the trouble the Huguenots were then raising, which was the very reason that caused him to linger and partake of the hospitality of the inn. He was for the present without money but that would be remedied in two or three days as a great sum was being sent him to this place.

"In the meantime, my friendly host, make no

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bones of doing everything in your power to make Monsieur's brief stay with you pleasant to him, and his servitors, who are all in the direst need of it, nor should you inquire too particularly into things that do not concern you; his funds are far from here, and to you he shall simply be Monsieur of the Clergy, who has a lofty position, who has paid you a compliment by coming to you."

The host, who wished to thread his needle, spared no efforts to cook for his distinguished guest and treat him with respect, and also his servitors who were thus in clover for three or four days. If the landlord went to the chamber it was always with the greatest respect, and whatever his motive, he received always the same reply, "ita, ita;" and whenever the servitors waited on their lord they walked so softly that they would scarcely have broken an egg. They took their ease and, being well refreshed, they decided one fine morning to get their saddles and boots whilst their horses were at the forge or were being watered, under pretext that they wanted to look around and see what was going on, and fixed their meeting place at another house. So well did they take their measures, and so softly did they glide away that they made their escape, while Monsieur, the sole remaining gage of their hospitality, remained asleep in his bed, as they had thoughtfully taken with them the nuptial hope chest with which they had furnished him, to make him acceptable as a guest.

The host, who had busily employed himself over his spits, began to wonder where the people of his lordship could be, but he could find no traces of a

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single one of them for all his diligence. Nevertheless at about ten o'clock, he made bold to knock lightly at the door of the room, then two or three times, more loudly, and finally, when no answer was vouchsafed, he entered the room, and found the windows tightly closed and firmly bolted. He searched high and low for Monsieur, fumbling around in the gloom, he saw him not but at last he heard him break wind harmoniously as is the fashion amongst men of the better breeding.

"It is eleven o'clock," cried the host, who in the darkness had knocked his head against the mantle-piece, "dinner is served, Monsieur, and is in danger of spoiling; Monsieur, shall I lay the places, please?"

The rapsallion, still asleep, answered "ita, ita," in a deep base voice.

The windows were opened and everything was scrutinized and carefully examined by the hostess, who soon knew all, as women are wont to be ever on the watch, if their associates have retired. The servants knew nothing of the matter, nor did the chamber-maids, as they had been well trained to knock long before they have any intention of entering a room, and it was decided, when this snow-man was discovered, to give him a beating and dismiss him quietly at the back door, that the neighbors might never learn of the prank that had been so neatly put upon them.

It is not our contention that episodes even from so charming a collection as the "*Contes d'Eutrapel*" are in any way worthy to be related in connection with charming old Chaucer. It was merely that we were attempting to show how powerful was the

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influence of the churchmen upon even the rankest scum of the mediaeval social cess-pool, and Chaucer's description of one of the finest types led us astray.

The merchant, with his forked beard and Flanders beaver hat, sits high upon his horse and discourses solemnly; a careful and substantial citizen, who will never stub his toe; he will accumulate a competence, but he will accomplish nothing for the betterment of either his country or his race, and even his name is forgotten.

A lean and hungry clerk bestrides a horse as lean as a rake; though he is a philosopher there is little of gold in his coffer. He spends his pittance on books and learning, and it is interesting to contrast his condition in Merrie England with that of his fellows at the University of Paris or that of Orleans.

The Man of Lawe comes next, the soul of discretion, and the personification of order. Though extremely busy, he never seems so. He knows well the devious turnings and twistings of expediency, in fact, he would prefer a court where the sun could shine in through the dusty windows, as the Old Scratch works to better advantage in the dark.

We are surprised to find him in such miscellaneous company as that gathered in the Tabard, but, after all, he was rather more broad-minded than his fellows.

A country franklin is awaiting our attention; red is his face and his beard is white as pearl. He takes his stirrup cup religiously every morning of his life. Chaucer has drawn his portrait as a work of love, and we shall do the same. A very son of Epi-

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curus is this fine old man, whose thoughts turn on getting the most and the best out of life. The maxim of his master of philosophy, that pleasure itself is the perfection of felicity, was also his creed. His hospitality was well known throughout all the country in which he lived, and bread and ale abound in his ancestral halls. Baked meats and roasts were so plentiful that none who came to do him reverence had cause to complain. He was the Saint Julian of his province, and provided as munificently as did that saint,* n fact, a table ready covered stood day and night in his hall. A dagger and a pouch hung from his silken girdle, which was milk white.

An excellent and joyous judge, he must have been, and one who would not render the lot of prisoners harder than they could bear. In this fine old hostelry he is not out of place, as Chaucer has been at some pains to show. The clinking of glasses and the sizzle of fowls roasting on the spits are more to his taste than the austere asceticism of the courts of law, and Fielding, had he had the means, would have done even as he.

Had the brilliant and merry author of the *Contes d'Eutrapel* but known him, he would certainly have given him as companion at table and on the bench to his fine old judge, of whom he says:

"Whenever the opportunity arose, he condemned all the inhabitants of the village to dine or sup together, and make great cheer," which, as a matter of course, would bring them together at the tavern. In Brittany, it was customary to hear lesser cases at the tavern, and the author of the "*Contes d'Eutrapel*"

* See *Gesta Romanorum*, tale 18, ed. Swan.

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has a few words to say in praise of the usage that caused such matters to be submitted to the arbitration of the bottle before they were carried to the courts for battle.

"In very truth, he disposes of more cases in one day at the Magpie, then they do in three months in the courts, and the best way in which to clear the calendars and the dockets is to get the contending parties together and discuss the matter over a bottle."*

And in those good old times what applied to disputes applied also to everything else, and no bargain or deal was complete unless the ratification took place amid lifted glasses and libations of the publican's claret or port.

The city of Orleans was in those times the turbulent seat of contending factions, and town and gown were forever at war. The various litigants retired to the Crown of France and talked things over while consuming a bottle of wine: as a result, a contemporary writer says that "in all the city they had but one solitary sergeant royal who gained so little by his profession that to avoid starvation, he was forced to change his calling, leaving his stave or club to hang in his empty stall."

There was also an apparitor or court crier with the pilgrims. His face was rosy as a cherub's, being covered with pimples. His eyes were small and probably close together and he was lecherous as a sparrow. He had no eyebrows nor beard to speak of, and children were afraid of his face. He was in-

* Contes d'Eutrapel, op. cit. supra.

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debted to good old British Hunter for the correct diagnosis of his trouble.

"There are," said the old curmudgen, "three classes into which disease of the skin may be divided: one class mercury will cure, the second yields to sulphur, and the third, weeping and squamous eczemas, the devil himself couldn't cure."

This passage of Chaucer's is interesting for several reasons:

"Ther nas quik-silver, litarge, ne brimstoon,
Boras, ceruse, ne oille or tartre noon,
Ne oynement that wolde clense and byte,
That him mighte helpen of his whelkes whyte,
Nor of the knobbes sittinge on his chekes."

Fracastorius published his epic poem in 1530 or thereabouts, and the saying "fifteen minutes with Venus and three years with Mercury" is said to have originated during his age, yet we find Chaucer referring to the use of quicksilver in the treatment of skin lesions one hundred and fifty years before the Italian's times.

Our process server was a confirmed lover of garlic, onions and leeks, and also of strong wine, red as blood, and when he had had his fill of the latter, he commenced spouting the few Latin phrases he knew by rote, like any parrot, calling for its cracker. He was a good fellow, too, and for a quart of wine he would suffer any friend to have his concubine for months on end, without interfering in the slightest, though, if the opportunity arose, he was well skilled in plucking game birds too. He wore a garland of roses as large as the wreath usually adorning the ale-

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stakes, and in place of a buckler, he carried a cake shaped to that design.

Here indeed is a guest worthy of any and all of our taverns, and it is by subtle intention that Chaucer has linked this scabby rascal with the pardoner who rides with him. A more precious pair of knaves, and one harder to beat, would require some searching, and the garland and buckler are touches of subtle sarcastic banter which remind us of Jusserand's pointed criticism: "One is struck by the excellence of Chaucer's jesting, his caricature being almost a portrait."^{*}

As we have already dealt with the pardoner we will consider the miller and his toll.

He is a coarse ruffian, big-boned and muscular, short and thick-set and so block-headed that he could smash through any door by butting it. His beard was red as a fox's tail and as broad as a spade, and on the right side of his nose he had a wart from which projected a tuft of hairs as red as the bristles in a sow's ears. He was a jovial rascal and a teller of smutty tales, and he wore a white coat with a blue hood. He was skilled at playing the bag-pipes and piped the pilgrim train out of Southwark and on its way.

An ideal companion for the miller would have been the Wife of Bath. She is large and buxom, with a bold red face and horse teeth with gaps between. Though she was a cloth maker of the finest, she would have been even more successful as the keeper of a tavern. Five husbands had gone their way after living with her besides others whom in her she had

^{*} English Wayfaring Life, ed. 1920, p. 198.

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known without benefit of clergy. She had travelled from Dan to Beersheba, and none knew better than she the remedies of lost love and the power that lurks in a caudle. No woman in all the parish dared make her church offering before her unless she courted trouble with the good wife, who could hold her own in any company and tell a tale as recondite as the most risqué. Her hips are large and, though she sits her palfrey easily, she seems to be poured into her saddle so that she overflows at either end, and the finishing touch is in her hose, which are of fine scarlet red, and so tightly fastened that there are no wrinkles. Her shoes are of soft leather and are new, and on her heels she wears a pair of spurs.

As to the artisans whom we meet in the Tabard, the haberdasher, the carpenter, the weaver, the dyer, and the upholsterer, they have little place in this tavern, and the mere whimsy of chance has brought them there. They are too respectable and consequently too dull to have much of a place in this sparkling company, and Chaucer gives them little in his prologue. They are men of property, fit to become aldermen; their wives have social aspirations and will be called madame, some happy day. Their gear is of the finest, and their knives and belts are garnished with silver instead of brass. People such as these, well supplied with this world's goods do not drink to excess, whether as guests or hosts. Chaucer's attitude towards them must have borne some resemblance to that of Louis XI towards the English whom he feasted at Amiens, as related in the "Contes d'Eutrapel."

"When he feasts the English at Amiens, with the

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help of I know not how many picked men of huge proportions, who drink indoors, feasting the strangers, and drinking round for round with them to the very end, and keeping their places as well. Of a truth, when the fine continence of these men is seen, these same men who, in times of peace are hard working artisans, and in times of war such excellent archers, well skilled in the use of the cross-bow and the long feathered arrow, and as beautifully trained to wield the plane or the mallet, as weapons of war, which characterizes the yeomanry of England, there is less room for astonishment at the fatal results of the battles of Crecy, Poitiers, and Azincourt."

"The English companies were not recruited as was our infantry, from wine bibbers, nor from the scum or staff of taverns and pothouses, who lower in the ale-house and cower on the field of battle. Their officers were never commissioned as captains of the Pewter Post, nor of the Stag's Horn, nor yet of the Drinking Magpie, or the Green Cross," is the ironical comment of the author of the "*Contes d'Eutrapel*," who gives them as ensigns the emblems of the taverns in which they had their training.

And he then goes on to speak of the children of the town, who with all their brave accouterments and show, are better qualified to pilfer property than to defend it, as they are cowardly by nature, and never brave unless they have the advantage of numbers and position.

It is true, also, that as the economic situation of the realm improved, the English were no longer able to maintain a standing army of such fine quality, except in the face of some great emergency, as their

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guilds commenced perfecting those textile industries that were to work havoc with the continental institutions, and were to enable them to become an exporting rather than an importing nation, in all that pertained to finished products. With the increase of internal prosperity, the middle class artisan, who, with the tiller of the soil is the very backbone of every civilized nation, found better reward for his labors than taking the king's shilling. Recruiting was then carried on amongst a few of the trades such as that of the fullers, but in time even this resource was exhausted, and the monarch was compelled to rely upon the taverns and their hangers-on to help the press gangs find the men necessary to the service. Thus the army began to suffer from a multitude of vagabonds who would otherwise have never been permitted to wear the uniform, and the troops of both France and England were at last on an equal footing.

Falstaff, in his wonderful tirade, has given us a scathing criticism of the forces sent him to command, and we shall permit him to speak for himself as there was never another so competent to speak for him.

"If I be not ashamed of my soldiers, I am a soused gurnet. I have misused the King's press damnably. I have got, in exchange of a hundred and fifty soldiers, three hundred and odd pounds. I pressed me none but good householders, yeomen's sons: inquired me out contracted bachelors, such as had been asked twice on the bans; such a commodity of warm slaves, as had as lief hear the devil as a drum; such as fear the report of a caliver, worse than a struck fowl, or a hurt wild-duck. I pressed me none but such toasts and butter, with hearts in their

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bellies no bigger than pins' heads, and they have bought out their services; and now my whole charge consists of ancients, corporals, lieutenants, gentlemen of companies, slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth, where the glutton's dogs licked his sores; and such as, indeed, were never soldiers, but discarded unjust serving men, younger sons to younger brothers, revolted tapsters, and ostlers trade-fallen; the cankers of a calm world, and a long peace; ten times more dishonorably ragged than an old pieced ancient: and such have I, to fill up the rooms of them that have bought out their services, that you would think that I had a hundred and fifty tattered prodigals, lately come from swine-keeping, from eating draff and husks.

"A mad fellow met me on the way, and told me I had unloaded all the gibbets, and pressed the dead bodies. No eye hath seen such scarecrows. I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat: nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on; for, indeed, I had the most of them out of prison.

"There's but a shirt and a half in all my company: and the half shirt is two napkins, tacked together, and thrown over the shoulders like a herald's coat without sleeves; and the shirt, to say the truth, stolen from my host at St. Albans, or the red-nosed innkeeper of Daventry.

"But that's all one; they'll find linen enough on every hedge."*

Such was the opinion of the most illustrious of all tavern frequenters. He who had of Mrs. Quickly

* King Henry IV, Part 1, Act IV, Scene II.

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what men had had of her before, who, like Shenstone, all his life long received his warmest welcome at an inn, and held his riotous and brilliant court under the smoked rafters of the Garter and the Boar's Head. He objected to the thefts of henchmen because they were too open and ill-timed. He condemns Pistol for thieving, yet shares in the spoils. Old in years, and two yards in girth, his vanity assures him of complete success in affairs with women, and finally makes him the victim of a modified phase of the badger game. He is overwhelmed with an infamous suspicion, in a house in which he has no legitimate business, concealed in a laundry hamper under a mass of greasy napkins and filthy stockings, carried from the house and thrown into the Thames. He is the veritable beggar on horseback in affairs of the heart. Beleaguered by a troublesome intrigue with Mrs. Quickly, owing her a scot of a hundred marks, he yet extricates himself from the law-suit she has brought, by working on her vanity.

He is robbed of his night at the Boar's Head and Doll is prevented from carrying out her promise to canvass him between a pair of sheets, because twenty bare-headed and sweating captains were knocking on every tavern door and inquiring for him.

And the description of his death has but one equal in all literature, I refer to that in Hippocrates, with which Shakespeare may have been familiar:

"Nay, sure, he's not in Hell: he's in Arthur's bosom, if ever man went to Arthur's bosom. 'A made a fine end and went away, an it had been any christom child; 'a parted ev'n just between twelve and one, ev'n at the turning o' the tide: for after I saw him

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fumble with the sheets, and play with flowers, and smile upon his finger's end, I knew there was but one way; for his nose was as sharp as a pen an 'a babbled of green fields."*

For additional color and contrast, we will look briefly into Brantome, and Lingard, and compare their descriptions of those times with what Shakespeare has put into the mouth of Falstaff.

"For the most part," says Brantome, "these vagabonds were out and out ruffians, worthless scapegraces who had managed to evade the gallows only to become the scapegoats of the powers in authority. Their shoulders bore the brand of the fleur de lys; cropeared rogues they were, horribly bearded, with bristling locks that hung down over their ears, as though by that they could frighten their enemies."

Further on he speaks of their miserable equipment and their utter lack of military carriage:

"Marauding rascals, evil of complexion and badly armed; they did nothing so well as pillage the populace, and therefore, in ancient pictures, tapestries, and windows, they are represented as outcasts, clothed in rags. They wear long sleeved shirts, like Moors or ancient Bohemians. The same garments served them two or three months on end, without change, and their hairy briskets showed through the tatters, for all the world to see. Their bodies were covered with coarse matted hair, like those of apes; their shoes were gaping, their bodies covered with scars of old wounds or with infected cuts or stabs, and the dreary monotony of their

* King Henry V, Act II, Scene III.

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greasy rags was relieved by glimpses of their backsides.

"Others, who had been more successful in looting, had great store of silks which they wrapped around their feet, to serve as shoes, but the greater part of them showed their naked thighs, and wore their shoes hanging from their belts."

As was to be supposed, military mendicants such as these were frequently in the direst need of the very necessities of life, and the monasteries and convents were generally the institutions to which they applied for succor. So numerous did these bands of desperadoes become that they were sometimes able to usurp the authority in the more remote districts and even, in some cases, threaten the peace of the realm.

To deal effectively with this condition of anarchy and chaos, a statute was enacted which was every whit as barbarous as the thugs it was designed to suppress; a statute which, I regret to say, has found more than one echo in the new world.

Any individual who lives in idleness, without occupation, for a term of three days, is classified as a vagabond, and liable to the following punishment:

The letter V was branded upon his forehead and he was paroled to the worthy citizen who had benefited society by denouncing him, to benefit this same society further by serving the citizen as a slave for a period of two years. The new master was duty bound to nourish his benchmen on bread and water, and, as it was feared that the legal serf might transfer his activities elsewhere, a collar was riveted around his neck, or a shackle around his leg, in order

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that he might better concentrate his efforts on heart-breaking toil, and smart beneath the lash without being able to strike back.

Slaves who absented themselves for a period of five days were branded either on the forehead or the cheek, with the letter S (*scelerat*), and their servitude was extended to the term of their lives. If they were still recalcitrant, and repeated the offense, they were liable to punishment as felons, and could be roasted alive or condemned to the galleys.

Save for the fact that we have not seen fit to describe the females of this species, (it did not seem necessary,) we have presented a faithful picture of the hobohemians of the times, and we shall therefore return from this long digression and consider the character of the sailor whom Chaucer has numbered amongst his fellow pilgrims.

He hailed from somewhere in the west, probably from Dartmouth, and bestrode a nag as well as was to be expected of a sailor. He was garbed in a garment of rough cloth that came to his knees, and round his neck was a cord from which hung a dagger. He was tanned to an extraordinary degree by the heat of a ferocious summer, and in spite of his smuggling proclivities, and the fact that he gained a doubtful title to his Bordeaux wines between two days, whilst the supercargo slept, he was a good fellow. He would fight readily at sea, and such prisoners as he took returned to their native lands via the water, after a stroll along the plank.

Every snug harbor, every rock and shoal along the coasts of the British Isles and Western Europe, from Spain to the Baltic, were known to him, and his

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vessel, the Maudelayne, had ploughed the waters and threaded the channels of all of them.

He is a bluff old fellow who has little Latin in his maw, and a detestation of preaching; as he shows with unmistakable rancor, when the jolly host announces:

"This loller heer wil prechen us som-what,"

"Nay," says the incensed mariner, "by my fader soule! that shal be nat,

. . . . heer he shal nat preche,

He shal no gospel glosen heer ne teche."

We will close our account of Chaucer's tavern companions with a brief description of the jolly host of the Tabard. It is said that Shakespeare derived his host of the Garter from good old "Henry" and this hypothesis does not seem out of order.

If the proprietor of the Tabard is the Henry Bailly who represented Southwark in the Westminster parliament, in the years 1376 and 1377, he must have been an unusual type, and one such as would scarcely have been found at all on the continent.

Let us see whether we can construct something of a portrait from what Chaucer has said and from the words put into his own mouth by the old conteur.

To begin with, he was, like Hans Carval, a gorbellied, jolly fellow, probably somewhat bald, and the very soul of hospitality, where he deemed it worth while. I do not mean by this that he was selfishly mercenary, for I do not think this was the case, but he loved good company and knew it when he encountered it. His reasons for volunteering his

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services as guide, philosopher and friend to the pilgrims, at his own cost, are threefold: it was spring, and mid-April in Kent is all a saint could ask, if only he be out of doors; Henry was a lover of tales and jesting; and thirdly, but not least, our bold spoken host, with the undertaker's tact, and bullied and brow-beaten by his buxom wife, a fact which might well make him deem purgatory itself a blessed relief. Fat men have ever been notoriously down on trouble, as it engenders in them a sort of black humor that sours the fluids of their livers and makes them pine; according to Robert Burton; and one of the most pathetically ridiculous spectacles in all the world is that of a trembling and sweating fat man trying to avoid even the appearance of a misunderstanding.

If wisdom and intuition be included in the accomplishments of such individuals, and in the case of our host, they were, their course would almost plot itself, and they would steer well to leeward of domestic infelicity.

He gives evidence of his feelings when he stops Chaucer in the recital of his first tale, which is in verse, and requests him to tell another, something on the old heroes, with wit and information in it: he listens with increasing dissatisfaction until the two knights challenge both his calling and his tastes by sleeping in the open and drinking nothing but water, and then breaks out:

"No more of that, for God's sake, you are merely wasting time and your rhymes are not worth. . . ." but we are far from the days of Waterloo.

Thereupon Chaucer relates the prose story of

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Melibeus and Prudence, and obtains unstinted eulogy:

I had rather my wife had heard that tale than have had a barrel of ale for myself, for she knows nothing of such patience as that of Prudence. When I beat my knaves, she runs screeching to me with a bigger and heavier stave: "slay every dog," she bawls, "break every bone in their bodies." And if it happen that any of my neighbors fail to bow to her in church, or have the effrontery to pass her by, she rages in my face when she gets home.

"False coward," she shrills, "avenge your wife, or give me your knife and take you my distaff and go and spin."

From that day the burden of her song is:

"Alas, that I was destined to wed a milksop or a cowardly ape, that will be stared down by every knave in the borough. You haven't the guts to back your wife up in her rights."

The only choice I have then in the matter is either to fight, or get me out the door, unless I want to make a fool of myself and rage like a lion. Some of these days she'll be the cause of my killing off a neighbor and then having to take to the woods. I don't like this knife business, yet I'm not keen on opposing her either for she is big in the arms, as anyone shall soon find that displeases her.

And she's a labbing shrew of her tongue, and has other vices, too, but I won't catalogue them because, look you, someone will be sure to tell her, if I do, and then goodnight!

Is it then any wonder that this fine, peace-loving boniface is willing to leave his bed and board for a

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brief space, and guide such select company through the lovely spring of Kent?

His utter freedom of constraint in dwelling on the foibles of his companions is delightful: he scores the drunken cook for selling pasties which have been more than once hot and cold; he invokes curses on the head of the dolt that ever designed so powerful and full-blooded an individual as the hunting ecclesiastic for a career in the church.

"I vow to God you have a full fair skin, no lowly cloisterer are you, but some governor, wily and wise. May confusion confound the wretch that first brought you into the church, had you as great a love for the game as you have might to play it, you had been a tread-fowl of some merit, and might have produced a numerous progeny. Were I a pope, every shaveling should have a wife, and the laymen would have a better chance. As it is the churchmen have the lion's share of treading, for the poor devils on the outside are but shrimps. From feeble and sickly trees no robust shoots are to be expected, and so it is; the heirs of the laity are too weak and impotent to fulfill their destiny, and our wives perforce seek consolation at the hands of the religious folk for they are better able to execute drafts on the bank of Venus than we are."

An interesting picture, and from the viewpoint of the middle classes. What the boniface said of England might with equal propriety be said of France, Spain and Italy, as the writings of their authors only too plainly state.

When the evening meal has been finished at the Tabard, the host pays his compliments to the entire

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company, and himself suggests that they place themselves under his ciceronage. They agree, and he then states his plan in full. This also is favorably received, and the landlord is to pass up the stories told and award a dinner at his tavern to the best entertainer of them all, the expense thereof to be divided equally amongst the rest.

In closing, I wish to state that, though there is no external evidence to show that our host's better half came from Greenwich, it is my belief that she was reared in that town. Otherwise, why should he remark, *en passant*, "there's Greenwich, where many a shrewe resides."

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CHAPTER XV

I regret that my way does not lead through the enchanted wonderland, that I may not compare the lusty wife of Bath with the Roman *Quartilla*, that I may not illustrate the rancor that lay between the scabby and pimpled bawds of the courts of law and those of the church of God, but it would not serve the purposes for which this work was written.

Every now and then some little point will crop up to show us that we are ever dealing with human beings, actuated by the very motives that drive us today, as, for instance, when the host comments on the technical side of cooking, and invidiously suggests that the good Roger was accustomed to remove the gravy from a meat-pie, if the confection was not sold on the day it was made, thus making it kosher and fit for sale at any time in the future.

He was good company, and, though free with his tongue, he was kind, and a worthy rival for him to whom the squires of Du Guesclin applied in their dire extremity.

We find few recorded instances of charity amongst the tavernkeepers of those times, and, when an instance does occur, it is worthy of a place in this chronicle. Poggio* and Desperriers** relate an instance of the kind, in which an impecunious guest was forced to use his wits to extricate himself from

* Poggio, 359.

** Desperriers, 122.

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a situation which threatened to become sufficiently embarrassing for all concerned.

A way-farer was travelling through the country, and, being oppressed with hunger, he betook himself to a tavern and stuffed himself so thoroughly that, come fair weather or foul, he would have little need of supper. His host made the rounds of the tables, and finally demanded his money, that there might be a place for some other guest. Thereupon this traveller replied that he had no money but that he would pay for his dinner by singing a song which would satisfy his host.

The latter, astonished at the nature of the answer made him, informed his guest that he needed no songs, that he wanted payment in coin of the realm, and that he was at liberty to take himself off as soon as the scot was paid. "What," cried the stranger, "will you not be content if I sing you a song that pleases you?"

"Yes," said the boniface, "if you sing one that pleases me, I will be content."

No sooner had he his answer than the transient commenced singing all kinds of songs, saving only one, which he carefully refrained from mentioning, and, when he had taken a long breath, he demanded to know if his excellency was satisfied.

"No," was the reply, "for none of the songs you have sung satisfy me."

Thereupon, to distract the taverner's attention from his song, he took from under his arm a bag full of silver and at the same time commenced singing another ballad very touchingly, while he fondled the pouch and permitted the coins to clink musically.

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The song was one well known to all who travel, and the refrain was *Metti la mano a la borsa et paga l'hoste*, put your hand in your pouch and pay the host. When he had finished he demanded to know if that pleased his host, if his landlord was satisfied.

"Yes," said the publican, "that pleases me well."

"Very well," said the guest, 'since you are content, and as I have acquitted myself of my promise, I will be on my way,' and so saying, he took his departure without paying.

After having read what Chaucer has to say of the Tabard, and Skelton's description of the ale-wife, there remains little to say of the inns of mediaeval England, unless we have omitted something of value either in the prologue or in the body of the *Canterbury Tales*. Gower can contribute little, and Langland's description would add little that is new.

There is, however, one little point in the chronicle of William of Malmsbury, which has been cited by Strutt.* It may be said to form the third chapter in the history of the League for Making Virtue Odious. The first being the rescript of Domitian, as related by Suetonius, his biographer; and the second being found in the activities of Caesarious, that frightful old prohibition zealot who anathematized the drinkers and gluttons of his times.

We cite this curious regulation in connection with the *Canterbury* pilgrimage to show that it was no longer in force.

During the reign of Edred, when St. Dunstan had all the powers of a prime minister, London itself, and every outlying village, had a number of ale-

* *Ancient England*, Strutt, Vol. I.

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houses and taverns. The bishop caused the wrath of the prince to be turned against these places, and by royal decree, they were all closed, saving a single one in each town or village. Nor did the designs of the ruler stop there, for, actuated by the zeal of Dunstan, Edred went so far as to prescribe the amount of wine that should be consumed by each individual, and any evasions were causes for severe penalties.

The measures taken to enforce the stipulations of the decree were as singular as the document, and savor strongly of twentieth century practise. The mugs in which drink was served were ordered equipped with pins or studs, at different distances apart, and in case anyone drank at one draught more liquor than between the marker above the surface and that below it, he would be punished severely.

Regulations as outlandish as these are never long observed, and it is therefore without surprise that we note no reference to such a practise in Chaucer. Had the pardoner's habits been interfered with, he would certainly have informed us of the fact; he could not tell a story fit for refined ears to hear, without first meditating over a mug of ale.

The drink most in favor amongst the upper classes was, of course, wine. It must be remembered that in Chaucer's times, much of South Western France was in the hands of the English, and therefore much of their wine came from Bordeaux. Spanish wines were held in great esteem, "whan that they were not brewed in Zeeland," which shows us that our friends, the adulteraters, were set up in the exporting business.

As we have said before, the drink most in favor

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with the lower classes amongst the Saxons was beer. When William of Normandy won the battle of Hastings and with it the English crown, the country was colonized by the Normans, whose tipples was wine, and thus we see two opposing classes and two standards of living. Total amalgamation did not result for several centuries, and ale-wife and vintner flourished side by side. In a measure this was responsible for the moderate prices charged for merchandise, whether liquid or dry, and was thus reflected in the entire economic structure of society.

These prices were so reasonable that today they seem almost fantastic; one may well become a convert to the laudator temporis acti theory after contemplating the bill of charges presented to a group of travelling scholastics in the fourteenth century:*

Their trip took place in winter and they rode horseback. Their food was simple and the same items keep recurring. The sum of their expenditures for a single Sunday amounts to about fifty-four and one-half cents of our money:

Bread	-----	.08
Beer	-----	.04
Wine	-----	.025
Meat	-----	.11
Postage	-----	.005
Candles	-----	.005
Fuel	-----	.04
Fodder	-----	.20
Beds	-----	.04
		<hr/>
		.545

Taking it by and large, these prices are on a par with those of the Roman hostess at Isernia, and it is difficult to understand the complaints of the people,

* See the expense sheet of three members of Merton College who, with four servants travelled from Oxford to Newcastle in 1331. Rogers History of Agriculture and Prices, Vol. II., P. 638.

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on the score of the high cost of living. Yet complain they did, and Edward III, tried to annul the law of supply and demand by preventing the extortions of innkeepers and their minions, as well as those of retailers of the necessities of life.

From this expense sheet, it is seen that beds and beer were not expensive; in fact, the greatest item on the list is fodder for the horses, which cost as much as bread, beer, fuel and beds, combined. In London itself, the price of a bed, in those times was two cents per head.

In 1319, a party of twenty-six scholars travelled from Cambridge to York for Christmas, and the beds for the entire party generally cost sixteen cents.

The curious document known as the Privy Purse Expenditures of Henry VIII, from November, 1529, to December, 1532, shows that either the king was niggardly in paying for service, or that the prices were still exceedingly low. For example, we find him lodged at the Lion, in Sittingbourne, about forty miles from London, where he had tarried while on his way to Calais. Here he dined and spent the night, and when taking his departure he gave four shillings and eight pence to his hostess, the wife of the Lion. This was no extortionate charge certainly, for entertaining royalty.

In order to round the comparison out, and contrast the English charges with those of France in the fifteenth century, we will cite here an excerpt from the public documents of the city of Rheims.

The father of Joan of Arc came thither in September, 1429, to be present at the coronation of the Monarch, a ceremony which might not have taken

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place except for the activities and patriotism of his daughter. He spent several days at the Ane Raye (Scratching Donkey), and for his entertainment, the city paid the sum of twenty-four livres, (the livre of those times being equivalent to twenty cents).

Unfortunately there are few expense sheets of the pilgrims of the times extant, but one there is, written by Nicolas de Hault, Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, entitled, "A Trip to Jerusalem, in the Year 1593." During a journey which began in April, 1593, and ended in March, 1594, he kept a minute account of his expenses which amounted in all to one hundred and fifty-nine ecus (crowns), twenty sols, and six deniers.

If we figure six francs to the ecu, we have a total amounting to a little over nine hundred and fifty francs, not a great amount for a trip so long and arduous, and a fine commentary on the prices in those times, and he adds, "and I suspect that the greater part of our company got along on less, and perhaps with less inconvenience than I experienced."

Amongst a number of curious items, we find the following, which are representative:

	Ecus Sols Deniers		
To Marco Farguinetto, captain of the vessel, one month's fare-----	8	00	00
For re-soling my shoes-----			22
For 35 wreaths of Olive Branches, from Mt. of Olives-----	1	13	
For examining the Tomb of the Virgin			22
For 38 Crosses, purchased at Bethlehem	1.5		
For Six Handkerchiefs-----		30	

From the above statement, we should not derive the opinion that many of the pilgrims of the times travelled in this way, far from it. They got their sustenance gratis, for the most part, either at the

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monasteries, or in the houses of the clergy. Some availed themselves of the rights of salt and fire, and applied to the castles of the great, where they dined in the huge hall, but sat at the lower table with the dependent classes.

Should the reader care to go further into the prices of those times, he is referred to Rogers, as above, and a complete list of the prices of the latter sixteenth century, is to be found in Hubert Hall's Society in the Elizabethan Age, pp. 178 to 233 inclusive, edition published by Lippincott, 1887. The account of Wild Darrell's at Warwick Lane from April 16, to July 14, 1589, covering almost every common commodity, being of the greatest interest both to the hotel keeper and to the economist. I give the bill of fare for one day:

AT MY COMINGE UP Wednesday, April 16, 1589

DYNER	Pence
A Pece of Bief-----	xviiiij
A Legg of Mutton-----	xx
ij Chickens and Bacon-----	xx
ij Chickens and ij Pigions Rost-----	xviiij
For Dressings All-----	vij
For Parsley, Cloves, and Sawse for Mutton---	vj
Bread and Beare-----	xvj
	<hr/> 8/9

SUPPER EODEM	Pence
A Shoulder of Mutton-----	xx
iiij Pigions-----	viiij
For Roasting the Mutton, Pigions, ij Chickens and ij Rabbettes-----	xj
For Sawse, Soppes and Parsley-----	v
Bread and Beare-----	xliij
	<hr/> 4/10

Claret brought sixpence a quart, in those times, Rhenish wine ten pence, white wine sixpence, a lemon

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cost one penny, and oranges two, ale two pence the pint, candles fourpence the pound, butter fourpence the pound, and so on.

Monday, May 19, he dined at Queenes Hed in Pater Noster Rowe, for 5/1, but on May 22, his dinner check at the Kinges Hed, in Newe Fishe Street, was 16 shillings. Three pints of strawberries cost him twelve pence, one pound of sugar seventeen pence, a quart of sack, eight pence, whereas a barrel of beer came to four shillings, O tempora, O mores. The total spent for sustenance during this time was 42 pounds, 6 shillings, 10 pence, and we should not forget that then, one year after the dispersal of the Great Armada, when Queen Elizabeth was never more powerful, Shakespeare and Jonson were coming into their own, and the roaring choruses at the Mermaid Tavern permeated the dense fog of London nights, to resound throughout the English speaking world as long as culture and wit and all that makes life worth while, shall persist.

But we had still another motive in thus introducing to the reader, the papers of the Darrell family, and that motive was to show the change which had made itself felt in the land.

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CHAPTER XVI

In the ages that had gone before, the people had lived more upon the produce of the land than upon the beasts of the field, and their beverages were milder in proportion. Fish was consumed to a much greater degree in the older times, and dairy products as well. Tillage on a small scale, as for example, amongst the little tenant-farmers on all the great landed estates, produced abundance of cereals at a moderate cost, and green vegetables graced the tables of the lowly as well as those of the wealthy. It was not an age in which preserved foods were used, as they were then unknown. Bacon was generally in use in place of beef, and the fact that bread was cheap and butcher's meat dear augured well for the public health of the state. Grain-beer, ale, and ciders were the drinks of the laboring classes, and the vintages of Spain and France were known only to the nobles or to the money lending classes.

When, however, we reach the middle of the sixteenth century, we are confronted with one of those mysterious phenomena of evolution upon which the fate of nations depends. It is not easy to account satisfactorily for this change which took place, this social renaissance, which so much resembles our own American problem of the day, in which the current sets toward the cities and away from the land. Agriculture was slowly displaced and grazing began to be the calling most in vogue. Grains advanced in

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price, while coarse meats came down. Bacon and fish were less in demand; game and poultry came to be considered as luxuries, and vegetables were practically never seen in the green state.

The masses were nourished on salt beef, or upon inferior mutton, poorly roasted. The meal and flour were weavily or mouldy, full of grit; such rye as was available was probably spurred and caused much sickness. All this ill-balanced diet, which was subject to little change, was washed down with potent liquors, even the ale undergoing a change for the worse, and the composition of a tankard of strong ale was as elaborate as the brewing of a pot of burnt sack or negus.

In former times, the monarchs of England had exerted the whole power of the realm to protect their title to Gascony and the Southwest of France. The external trade was heavy, as Froissard has pointed out, and if, at that time; as many as three hundred vessels cleared from English ports for Bordeaux, we may well believe that the cargoes carried consisted largely of wines of the occupied provinces. Hence Chaucer's allusion to the sailor's smuggling is no mere chance statement. Though the English fought hard, in the Hundred Years War, to over-run France, they fought still harder to prevent their own expulsion from the southern provinces, and the wine famine that was certain to ensue among the elect.

With the signing of the peace, there arrived a better understanding with Spain and Italy, and the clarets of France gave place to the luscious and fiery vintages of the new allies, and the crown proceeded to

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lease to favored individuals, certain rights in the customs, a classical example being the wine licenses issued to Sir Walter Raleigh. When Henry VIII invaded France, his army was well supplied with the vintages of Spain, and the Peace of the Cloth of Gold resulted therefrom.

The light French vintages that had been so much in demand amongst the robust yeomanry of Edward III, such as were consumed by Chaucer and his party at the Tabard, were not of sufficient potency for their mouthier descendants, who served Shakespeare as the models from which he drew Bardolph and Pistol; they were but "thin potations" to Mrs. Quickly's guests at the Boar's Head. When she informs Doll Tearsheet that her canary is a "marvellous searching wine," she at least sticks as closely to the truth as was her wont.

We have spoken above of the usefulness of the taverns in matters of espionage; it remains to say that the taverns, though they pandered to many of the vices of society, covered much of its naked hideousness. The sanctuaries of the past made admirable penitentiaries, the monastic hospitian anticipated the needs for poor-houses, and the ancient ale-houses were the snares in which criminals were caught red-handed.

Though tavern brawls have resulted in the death of many famous authors, yet these frays very seldom had a fatal ending, and where some bully did break the head of an enemy, he rarely escaped the full penalty for his crime, and society was doubly benefited.

Though it would probably be impossible at this

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time to estimate the number of taverns and ale-houses, in portion to the needs of the population, and in an earlier age they were certainly not in excess of the wants of the traveller, yet we may gain a vague idea by the returns from a few of the counties, returns which were procured to enable the government, at its wits end for money, to re-impose a license on every such establishment. Thus the Council in 1577, ordered exact statistics on the number of taverns and ale-houses in the entire country, in order that it might annul the licenses in force and issue new ones at half a crown each. This was to be used to complete the harbor improvements of Dover. Exactions of this sort, while highly profitable at the time, were also excellent precedents for future action, and not long after, the citizens of Canterbury petitioned the crown for a grant out of the impositions on ale-house, as they were the tippling houses of the times, and the inn or tavern, when not used primarily as a wine cellar, seems to have been the genuine descendant of the hospice of former ages.

We come at last to the furnishings of the taverns of those times, and we shall take Chaucer's Tabard as our model.

The "darke parlour" is on the ground floor, facing the street, and on this same floor are a hall and a general reception room called the "parlour," which was probably the dining-room of the house, as it led into the kitchen. Underneath the "darke parlour" was a cellar, and in the storey above the first floor were three rooms, the "middle chamber," "the corner

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chamber," and another known as "Maister Hussyes' chamber," with garrets or cook-lofts above.

The storey over the "great parlour" contained another room; and there were also an "entry chamber," a "newe chamber," a "flower de luce," and one other, the location of which is not specified in the legal description of the inn. There was also a warehouse, probably under a separate roof, a coal-hole, an oven-house, a double stable with an oat-loft over it, and a similar stable with a hay-loft over it.

In the matter of furniture, the host and guests of an establishment as pretentious as the Tabard, would not have been as well off as today, but the tastes were not as difficult to please then, as at the present time. We must remember that, aside from any Roman baths, the first hot water plumbing in England was due to Wellington, and that there are still many rural districts in which there is no plumbing whatsoever.

There would be a great variety of kettles, both of copper and brass, pans, pots and basins. Brass or latten candlesticks, a chafing-dish and a mortar, tongs, pot-hooks, and irons; waffle-iron, skillet, dripping-pan, and steamer, all would be in evidence, and in the pantry we would find a complete graduation of pewter pots, from the pottle down to the gill; glasses, stone galley-pots, and trenchers.

It is the linen closet, however, which will startle even a modern boniface; both by the profusion with which it is provided, and by its excellent quality and variety.

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A contemporary establishment boasted the following:

Sheets -----	13
Tablecloths (damask) -----	15
Doilies (damask) -----	15
Cupboard Cloths -----	3
Table Napkins -----	62
Napkins (damask) -----	72
Hand Towels -----	22
Towels (damask) -----	11
Pillow-cases -----	7
An incredible quantity of fine unbleached linen, whether plain or figured, for curtains and drapes.	

The sleeping accommodations were not inadequate; joined bedsteads, with feather beds, flock, standing, or trundle-beds; bolsters, such as they called the "Dutch widow," pillows, blankets, and coverlets; these latter often being ornamental in the extreme, and the room was sure to have a multitude of hangings. The other furniture consisted of cupboards, side-boards, chests, tables, chairs, stools and benches. The floors were generally covered with rushes, but sometimes they were sanded. Often there were pictures, generally on religious pageantry, and it is worthy of note that at this time, the conventional Christ of our modern art, came into being on the continent.

In bringing our account of the taverns of the Middle Ages to a close, we will discuss briefly, one other powerful but obscure phase of the host's influence in the community.

The keepers of the hedge pothouses on the continent, and the ale-houses in England were generally squalid merchandisers whose power for evil was limited by their opportunities for action. This was far from being the case, however, with those wily bonifaces who conducted pretentious establishments

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in the larger cities and shire towns. The host in places such as these, unless he were a professional vintner or caterer, was often a member of some other trade guild, for example, that of the weavers; in which case he left the supervision of the tavern to his active partner, who was generally his wife. As banking was in the hands of the workers of precious metals, in those times, and as their corporation was closed, a landlord of a profitable inn or tavern often had excellent opportunities to loan funds on the intangible security of future expectations, and thus secure not only the patronage of his silly dupes, but also their inheritance when they came into property.

He lodged and boarded these social butterflies, advanced them money, encouraged them in dissipation, took an active interest in their affairs, to prevent his security from being made subject to dangerous mortgages, other than his own, transacted their legal business, and superintended their property. The case of Orlando, in "As You Like It," and that of Gamelyn, are cases in point. This rosy cheeked and patient taverner would perform all these services for his guest on the strength of a certain security, but when his time had arrived, when the heir came into his own, or when the bond could no longer be renewed with safety or profit, the darling of fortune had cause to repent him of his ways. Cases of this kind were extremely common; a silk clad courtier, with a moustache which was the despair of every bird of paradise in the district, would run up a bill at the Rose and Crown, the Hare and Hounds, the Cauliflower, or some other establishment, and his clothes

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and trinkets would be sequestered, valued at the host's appraisal, and sold to satisfy the debt.

Then again there were sinister entanglements, such as often threatened the titles to properties.

The proprietor of the Castell Inn, near Smithfield Bars, was the fortunate possessor of a favorable lease. The owner of the property was a gentleman well along in years, and perhaps not difficult of approach. He frequently visited his tenant's place of business; in fact, he spent his declining years there, and received every care and attention. The boniface lent him money, and the hostess made all sort of savory roasts and caudles for him, at a time when spices were extravagantly costly. They ordered runlets of Rhenish wine, "and besides did serve his torne and occupye and dispose herself at his pleasure."

Slandrous tongues were silenced by the statement that their honored guest had not, like Falstaff, "practiced upon the easy-yielding spirit of this woman, and made her serve his uses both in purse and in person;" he was old, and whatever his inclinations, he was powerless to minister to them. After his death, the same delicate courtesies were bestowed upon his heir, the latter receiving money to bury his father, more cash was advanced to the young wife who accompanied her husband to London, and the young couple, with their retinue of servants and horses were lodged and entertained to their hearts' content.

When it was discovered that the family mansion was out of repair, that the roof and gutters needed replacing, and the out-buildings re-tiling, it was the landlord of the Castell Inn who saw to everything

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and paid the bills. Coal and wood were provided lavishly, and everything made cosy and snug, all at the expense of this jolly host.

Furthermore, this same good Samaritan defrayed all the costs of administration, and when he himself was too ill to go in person, he hired an agent, "who travailed at his affairs in my stead, being then visited with sickness."

At last, when everything had been done, when the heir was comfortably settled, the long suffering host presented his bill of account for all the disbursements made on behalf of the father and the son. The heir found this document so little to his taste that he called his benefactor an out and out usurer, and refused to pay, whereupon it is reasonable to suppose that, as all the host's policy had been dictated by his yearning to own and possess the property adjacent to the Castell Inn, took such steps as caused this bit of land to revert to him and his in perpetuo.

Another case of the kind happened in the fine old town of Chester. A youthful profligate was maintained and financed by a tavernkeeper, who reckoned on his guest's future expectations to discharge the debt. This guest was lodged with a mercer, but he took his meals at the innkeeper's table, and the host was also forced to furnish the money for the lodgings and for the silks and popinjay purchased of the mercer. This state of affairs continued for two years, the taverner standing all the expense, and in addition, paying for a saddle horse, and for the keeping and shoeing of another animal as well. Loans were of frequent occurrence, and in addition

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there were the costs of an action levied against the youthful prodigy, and these the host defrayed.

On the memorable occasion of the cock-fight at Wryme Hill, more funds were needed, and still more in order that he might go "to the boules to my coz. Mannering."

Another item that bulked large in the score was ale, and there were several payments because a servant had been ordered to ride into Leicestershire, for the purpose of bringing back some "white hose lined with sarsenett."

In summing up the situation, we may safely say that the masses must have some outlet for the energy that boils within them, and the various countries tolerated the unseemly taverns and stews for the same reason that the Chinese authorities tolerated opium dens. What has been said of these, applies also to Shakespeare's reasons for writing "Measure for Measure," and this may be one of the reasons why we, who are so far advanced that we tolerate nothing, "look back with curious eyes on those venerable institutions whose like can hardly now be endured amongst us."*

Such were the standards of hospitality in the past, and who are we to cavil at their lack of modern conveniences, and their ignorance of the sanitary practise of today? Let us end by summing up the situation as did an acute observer and an experienced traveller, in a newspaper article, bearing the date of April 28, 1924.

"What I went to your hostelry for, and what nine men out of ten go there for, is hospitality. And that's one thing we don't find.

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"I found two things in your inn; obsequiousness and indifference.

"The obsequiousness was displayed by that portion of the help that was looking for tips; the indifference by those you couldn't tip.

"Alow and aloft, venality and subservience stuck out all over these persons. Their acts and manners dumbly shrieked, 'how much is this fellow going to give us?'

"The impression I got was not that I was there to be made comfortable, but that I was there to be fleeced. I was not a guest, I was prey."*

We have seen the tavern yield place to the coffee house and the tea shop in Merrie England, and we ourselves are at present undergoing the same change from the older order. We have also seen the coffee-house and its ilk yield place to the better class of taverns, and is it unpatriotic to hope that some sweet day, we may yet see a tankard of fine German brew with a collar of foam as thick and rich as cream, and, while we sip it, listen in the lovely woods of Ravinia, to Walter Damrosch, as in the good old days?

* Chicago Herald and Examiner, April 28, 1924.

FINIS.

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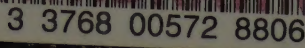
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